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THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

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THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

BY

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THIS STORY OF

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FOREWORD

WITHIN a generation a new way of looking at all history has become common among students of the past, a recognition of the fundamental importance of the economic basis of society, and the influence of economic changes on all human institutions and movements. The economic interpretation of history has not yet been applied to the period of the Reformation, and that fact is the chief justification of this attempt to retell a story that has been so often told, yet told inadequately. That the great religious struggle of the sixteenth century was only a phase of the social revolution then going on in Europe and effecting a transformation of all its institutions, that momentous economic changes were the underlying cause of political and religious movements, are ideas for which the reader will look in vain in books on the Reformation accessible to him. But these ideas are now accepted by most historical students, and in the light of them all the history of the past is undergoing a reinterpretation. The external events of the Reformation have been told before with substantial accuracy; what is now needed is illumination of the facts by the light of this new knowledge.

By itself this would be a sufficient justification for the writing of a new book on this old subject. But there are other reasons. For more than a generation, Europe has been swept with lighted candle to find the smallest fragment of document, or one overlooked fact, that could shed light on the Reformation period. The result has been the accumulation of an enormous mass of material, much of it trivial and jejune—mountains of chaff, to speak plainly, with here and there a kernel of precious wheat. Little, relatively, has been done in the way of comparing, sifting, unifying this mass of useful and useless information. Monographs have multiplied, it is true, until every character of the age, however little noteworthy, has his biography; and every event, however obscure, has its separate documented story. Has not the time come for the telling of the larger story once more, in the light of this newly discovered body of fact?

The scientific method of studying history, with its emphasis on original research, its multiplication of documents, its flood of monographs on fields more and more restricted, tends to issue in the mean and sordid collection of mere fact, and to make the writing of history, as a branch of pure literature, a lost art. The reader finds himself, in these days, condemned to a dreary pilgrimage through a valley of dry bones. This book

frankly confesses to be inspired by the older idea of history, now unfashionable, of furnishing the reader a logical clew to guide him through the labyrinth of accumulated fact, in which he might otherwise wander interminably. The great masters of historical writing in the past never dreamed that fact became less trustworthy by being interestingly told. Founding his work on painstaking study of the sources, the author has yet tried to make a readable narrative, worth while for its own sake. Relying chiefly on the contemporary documents, he has neglected nothing in the more recent literature that promised the least assistance toward a better understanding of the facts or their more accurate determination. To boast that one has mastered this vast literature of detail would probably be deemed immodest, but one may fairly profess that he has devoted many studious years to this object, and is reasonably confident that he has missed little of substantial value. Faithful study has been given to the original sources, and every statement likely to be controverted, or involving important fact, has been supported by reference to authority, and the location of important quotations has been scrupulously indicated. In cases where the importance of the matter seemed to require such treatment, or where the author's translation or interpretation might be challenged, the exact words of the original have been given in the note.

Special thanks are due, for the loan of valuable books, to Dr. Charles Ripley Gillett, former librarian of Union Theological Seminary, and Professor Walter Robert Betteridge, librarian of Rochester Theological Seminary.

ABBREVIATIONS

LDS, Luther's German Writings, Erlangen edition, 67 vols.

LOL, *Opera Latina varii argumenti*, supplement to Erlangen edition of Luther's Latin works, in 7 vols.

Walch, the St. Louis reprint of the well-known Halle edition. In the few references to the Halle edition, it is distinctly cited.

De Wette, Luther's Letters, edited by De Wette and Seidemann, Berlin, 7 vols.

CR, *Corpus Reformatorum*, the standard edition of Melanchthon's works, edited by Bretschneider and Bindsell, 28 vols.

ANF, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 9 vols., New York, 1886–1890.

Cochlæus, *Commentaria de actis et scriptis M. Lutheri*, Paris, 1565.

Currie, Letters of Martin Luther, translated by Margaret A. Currie, New York, 1908.

Gieseler, History of the Christian Church, translated by Henry B. Smith, New York, 1876, 5 vols.

Janssen, History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages, English translation, St. Louis (no date), 12 vols.

Jacobs, Martin Luther, "Heroes of the Reformation" series, New York, 1898. Book of Concord (referred to as "Concord"), Philadelphia, 1893, 2 vols.

Kidd, Documents illustrative of the Continental Reformation, Oxford, 1911.

Köstlin, *Martin Luther, Sein Leben und seine Schriften*, fifth ed., by Kawerau. Berlin, 1903, 2 vols. "Theology" appended to the name indicates "Luther's Theology," English translation by Hay, Philadelphia, 1879, 2 vols.

Löscher, Vollständige Reformations-Acta und Documenta, Leipzig, 1720, 3 vols.

Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Florence and Venice, 1759; vols. I–XXXI; supplement, Paris, vols. XXXI–XLIII.

Mag. Bull., *Magnum Bullarium Romanum*, ed. Cherubino, Luxemburg, 1742, 10 vols. Continuatio, Rome, 1855, 19 vols.

Michelet, The Life of Luther written by himself; Hazlitt's translation in the Bohn Library.

Ranke, History of the Popes, the well-known Bohn edition in 3 vols.

Raynaldus, Continuation of the great Roman Catholic history, the *Annales* of Baronius, years 1333–1565, Lucae, 1750.

Sarpi, History of the Council of Trent; English translation under name of Polano, London, 1676.

Seckendorf, *Commentarius historicus et apologeticus de Lutheranismo*, Leipzig, 1694.

Schaff, History of the Christian Church, New York, 1883, 7 vols. Creeds of Christendom, New York, 1877, 3 vols.

Sleidan, *De statu religionis et reipublicæ Carlo V. Cæsare commentarii*, references conformed to English translation by Bohun, London, 1676.

Spalatin, *Annales Reformationis*, Leipzig, 1718.

Smith, The Life and Letters of Martin Luther, by Preserved Smith, Boston, 1912.

Wace and Bucheim, First Principles of the Reformation, or, the Ninety-five Theses and the three Primary Works of Dr. Martin Luther, London, 1883.

ZKG, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte.*

INTRODUCTION

GERMANY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

LUTHER taught nothing new. His doctrine was not new even in Germany. A generation earlier John of Wesel had attacked indulgences, and had taught justification by faith in Luther's own university, with equal boldness and superior learning. Wiclif in England, Hus in Bohemia, and Savonarola in Italy had fully realized the corruptions of the Roman Church, and denounced them with a vigor that even Luther never exceeded. The characteristic doctrines of the German Reformation had been developed and proclaimed long before the Saxon reformer opened his eyes to the light of day, in terms almost identical, and quite identical in substance, with those found in his writings. It becomes, therefore, an interesting historical question, Why did Luther succeed in leading a Reformation while his predecessors failed? Some would answer, some have answered, by magnifying Luther's greatness. He has been pictured as the colossus who bestrode Europe, by his towering personality dwarfing all men of his age, and bringing the most wonderful things to pass by the sheer force of his character and will. The explanation is simple to naïveté, too simple to be convincing. Something is no doubt to be ascribed to the personality of a man so out of the common, but more is to be ascribed to Luther's greater opportunity. The difference between him and his predecessors is less a difference of men than of times. In Germany of the sixteenth century, as compared with England of the fourteenth, or Bohemia and Italy of the fifteenth, we are to seek and find the solution of our historical conundrum.

I

THAT series of events which we are accustomed to call the Reformation should be viewed as a continuation of that other great movement known as the Renaissance. Humanism was a purely intellectual revolt against the shackles of the scholastic philosophy and ecclesiastical authority. Nothing could be more natural, however, than that, once the liberty to think had been vindicated, the new-won freedom should be used to question whether scholasticism and ecclesiasticism had a more rightful authority over men's souls than over their minds. The spirit of intellectual freedom fostered by the Renaissance inevitably issued in the insurrection of the human mind against the absolute power claimed by the

spiritual order, which we know as the Reformation. If the Renaissance was, to use Michelet's phrase, the discovery of the world and of man, the Reformation was the rediscovery of the soul and its God.

Michelet's phrase is, after all, more striking than true. The spiritual significance of the Renaissance is that it was the rediscovery of the individual. Medieval society, following the ancient Roman theory that a man does not exist for himself, but for the State, allowed the smallest scope for the individual, and made the community the all in all. The corporate idea was so emphasized as to dwarf the individual till he became a cipher, which had value only when annexed to the significant figure, society. From this theory it followed that the rights of individuals were a negligible quantity, as compared with the duties owed to State and Church. The abuse of freedom of thought, for example, was considered a much greater evil than the denial of freedom of thought. The code of law and of morals limited individual action in every thinkable way; and so far were the people as a whole under the sway of such ideas that public opinion often went beyond the law in its denial of the rights of the individual. A reaction against such a state of things was the only hope of Europe to avoid such stagnation, such arrest of mental and spiritual development, as befel China about the beginning of our Christian era.

While the Renaissance in Germany owed its origin to Italy, it speedily assumed a character of its own. In Italy, Humanism was superseded and almost eclipsed by Art, but in Germany Humanism easily retained its first place. The more serious and thoughtful nature of the German people, and their native tendency to metaphysics, were perhaps the chief factors in the impartation of this different trend to the revival in that land. It was in Germany, too, that the new art originated, which so powerfully promoted the revival, the art of printing. The invention of movable types was the greatest single achievement in the progress of civilization, if we consider the enormous results of the invention, which are even yet only beginning to be manifest. By the year 1500 there were six presses at Mainz, where the art seems to have originated, in Ulm six, in Basel sixteen, in Augsburg twenty and in Nürnberg twenty-five. A single firm of printers, the Kobergers, had a little later twenty-four presses, and employed a hundred men as typesetters and pressmen, and by their enterprise they are said to have become rich. From Germany the new art was extended to Italy, Spain and England; and in all these presses the first employees were men trained in their art in Germany, if not of German birth.

In addition to these private establishments, many of the monasteries set up presses, some of which are maintained to this day. The monks were not so lacking in intelligence, no matter what their enemies have

said about them, as not to perceive that the day of written manuscripts had passed; nor were they so deficient in shrewdness as to let slip the opportunity to keep themselves, for a time at least, where they had been for ages, in the leadership of the world of literature. It is not true that the Church discouraged the art of printing from the beginning; on the contrary, the Church from the beginning understood the value of the art, and strove to chain the press to her chariot wheel. Happily for the world, the effort was futile; the press proved too powerful an agency to be controlled by the Church, and soon won its independence. All that the Church was finally able to effect was the establishment of the Index and the prohibition of heretical books.

The book trade of the sixteenth century was simply the continuation of the previous trade in manuscripts. In this trade the monasteries, as the principal producers of manuscripts, had taken the lead; but there had developed a small class of shopkeepers and pedlers who bought and sold manuscripts. The rapid multiplication of cheap books greatly increased the number and activity of such traders, and soon at every fair there was a bookstall, while the pedlers who scoured the country districts carried a parcel of the new books in their packs. It was the existence of these facilities for the rapid publication and circulation of his writings when Luther began his work, that made possible the prompt reception of the ideas set forth in his Theses and early polemic treatises against the Church of Rome and the Papacy. Without the printing-press, it is hardly too much to say, the German Reformation could not have occurred. Something might have been attempted in the way of ecclesiastical reform, and might even have succeeded, but it would have been a far different affair from the historical movement, without this powerful alliance of the press.

It is important to mark that in this age, and indeed for a century or two more, the trade of printer and the business of publisher were not yet differentiated. Most printers were also publishers, though they often printed books that they did not sell, the author himself taking the whole edition and effecting its distribution for himself. Frequently a patron or subscribers were obtained in advance by the author to insure the defrayment of the cost of publication and the placing of the books in the hands of readers. No copyright in literary property was recognized. The principle seems to have obtained in the laws of all countries that by printing his book the author dedicated it to the public, and thereafter anybody had a right to multiply copies at his own risk and to his own sole profit. Copyright is an artificial monopoly created by specific statutes, and belongs to a later social stage. The effect of such free trade in literature was greatly to circumscribe the profits of both author and printer, especially of the author. Erasmus, easily the first man of letters of his day, often

complains in his correspondence that his books were so frequently reprinted by others that he himself derived little profit from their sale, though many thousands had been sold. Under such conditions, books were relatively plentiful and cheap.

It is well known that the first printed book was the Bible, an edition of the Vulgate having been sent forth from the Mainz press of Gutenburg in 1455, and by 1500 there had been nearly a hundred editions of the Latin Scriptures published in Europe, with the approval of the Church. But in Germany there was no formal disapproval of the publication of Bibles in the vernacular, though the Church seems to have done nothing actively to promote such publications, and no fewer than fifteen such editions were in circulation before Luther posted his Theses. Just what an "edition" means in this connection is not a little difficult to determine; in some cases an edition consisted of a thousand copies, but in others it was doubtless considerably less. It is safe to estimate that fully a hundred thousand copies of the German Bible were in circulation in Germany at the beginning of the Reformation. It may well be doubted if more copies of the Scriptures were in circulation in the England of Elizabeth. And this is to say nothing of portions of the Bible; and we know that there were twenty-two editions of the Psalms, and twenty-five of the Epistles before 1518. John Eck, the great antagonist of Luther, declared that he had read most of the Bible before he was ten years old. If Luther himself, as a passage in his "Table-Talk" tells us, did not so much as know that there was a Bible, until he found one in the Erfurt Library, he must have taken great pains to keep himself in such a state of ignorance. Notwithstanding the ravages of time, and the great destruction of property that took place during the Thirty Years' War, there still remain in the collections of Europe and America nearly forty thousand copies of the Bibles of this time, all antedating the Reformation.

The Renaissance in Germany was not only attended by this new interest in literature, but by a new interest in education, such as we do not find in Italy or elsewhere. Nine of the most celebrated universities of the period were founded within a space of fifteen years: Greifswald, 1456; Basel and Freiburg, 1460; Ingolstadt and Leipzig, 1472; Trier, 1473; Tübingen and Metz, 1477; Wittenberg, 1502; Frankfort-on-Oder, 1506. Elementary schools, that should act as feeders to the universities, were established everywhere. The esteem in which education is really held among any people may be accurately computed from the pay that is given to the teacher. In American communities the valuation of the teaching profession is measured by the fact that women teachers are paid a little more than a good cook of the same sex, but less than a stenographer or clerk; while a male teacher, if he is fortunate, may receive as much as

a carpenter or bricklayer, though even a college president receives a stipend less than the French *chef* of a rich man. We pretend, of course, to consider a man like President Eliot, of Harvard University, a more valuable man to our country than the most skillful concocter of an omelette, but it is mere pretense. As Americans of a certain class are fond of saying, "money talks," and the money is given, not to the prince of educators but to the knight of the saucepan. But during the Renaissance period they did otherwise in Germany. Then and there the pay of masters in the schools, of professors in the universities, equaled the fees of architects, or the salaries of court chamberlains; and the teacher was thus put on the economic level of the other professions, or those employments that were open to men of birth and blood. It is a duty to record also that Germany, like other countries, has suffered a sad relapse, and now treats her teachers little better than America.

One of the earliest German Humanists was Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464). He was a prelate of the Church, and rose to the rank of Cardinal; and his career alone does much to relieve the Church of Germany from the reproach of determined and unintelligent opposition to the new learning. From 1451 to the close of his life, Cardinal Nicholas bestirred himself to reform the abuses rife in the Church, to promote the cause of sound learning, and to extend the new interest in scientific inquiry. He restored a strict discipline, preached a pure Gospel, taught letters and science, accumulated manuscripts, and first directed the attention of Germany to the importance and fruitfulness of classical studies. He was in advance of his age in many things, notably in upholding the new and unpopular doctrine of the earth's rotation on its axis, for which the Inquisition condemned Galileo nearly two centuries later. He also advocated that revision of the Julian calendar which was actually undertaken by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582.

Hardly less influential in promoting Humanism was Jacob Wimpheling (1450–1528), often called the preceptor of Germany. He was first printer and publisher, scholar also, but above all educator. His "Guide for German Youth" (1497) and "Youth" (1500) were epoch-making writings. In these Wimpheling not only pointed out the defects of the current education, but outlined as clearly a better method. It was the first adequate discussion of education to be published in Europe—and by "adequate" one means, of course, not an anticipation of the theory and practice of education as developed in these later times, but a theory abreast of the knowledge of literature, science and psychology then possessed. Measured by his own times, Wimpheling was one of the strongest and most useful men that Germany has ever produced. But his courage was far inferior to his vision. When the crisis came his nerve failed. He

was one of the men of his age, of whom there were not a few, who were overwhelmed with anxiety for reform in the Church and scared to death when it came. When Luther first began his work, Wimpheling hailed him with joy as the coming deliverer of Germany; but as the Reformation progressed, the "divine brutality" of Luther, as Heine called it, first disgusted and then repelled him. He forgot, and too many others forgot that (to quote Heine again) "revolutions are not made with orange blossoms."

As Humanism increased in adherents and waxed in influence, there gradually developed three centers of humanistic activity, three propaganda, so to say, in Germany. Each of these had its distinctive character and import.

The first of these was the University of Heidelberg, founded in 1386, one of the most justly famous institutions in Europe. It was hither that the youthful Melanchthon came for his degree, when refused it at Tübingen, not because of defective attainments, but because he was deemed too young for such an honor. Hither before him had come his older relative, the great scholar Reuchlin, who divides with Erasmus the honor of being the foremost Humanist of the age. Reuchlin had gained his education at the University of Paris, and after taking his Master's degree taught for brief periods in several universities. His earlier interest was in the Greek classics, and his first distinction was gained as a teacher of Greek. But about 1490 he became interested in the study of Hebrew, learning that language in the only way then open to him, from oral instruction by a Hebrew rabbi, and thereby exposing himself to those imputations of heresy that followed him persistently during the rest of his life. In 1496 the Elector Palatine persuaded him to take a chair of Hebrew at Heidelberg, where he speedily became the foremost scholar of Europe in the Hebrew language and Old Testament literature. The first Hebrew Grammar was published by him, and the way was thus opened for the study of the Old Testament in the original by Christian scholars generally.

But although a great scholar, Reuchlin was a man of marked weakness of character. Irresolution was his greatest defect; he could not bring himself to decide on a course of action and then pursue it with persistence and boldness. This was well illustrated by a controversy into which he plunged with one Pfeffercorn, a convert from Judaism, who with the usual zeal of the convert proceeded to persecute his former religionists, and obtained imperial sanction for the destruction of their writings at his indiscretion. Reuchlin opposed this plan, denounced the indiscriminate burning of Jewish books, especially the Talmud, but when Pfeffercorn succeeded in raising a great storm against him, he began to temporize

and waver, and in the end was compelled to defend himself against charges of heresy. His lack of firmness and fatal facility of self-contradiction were accompanied by an irascible temper and the vituperative vocabulary of the times; and so his writings make painful reading for one who would fain admire, if he could, a scholar whose contribution to Biblical learning was so monumental. But it is impossible to do more than pity Reuchlin, and to feel relief that he was finally vindicated from the charge of heresy, at the same time one recognizes in his own timid vacillation the chief cause of his woes. Reuchlin was the early teacher of Melanchthon, and would deserve our grateful recollection for that fact alone, did not a suspicion intrude itself that he managed to infuse into the younger man a good measure of that moral pusillanimity and inveterate love of compromise which was the chief defect in the character of Luther's chief coadjutor. Reuchlin, like Erasmus and Wimpheling, was not a little terrified by the Reformation when it came, and, in his later years as professor of Hebrew at Ingolstadt and Tübingen, opposed Luther and Melanchthon, after having in vain tried to induce his relative to withdraw from Wittenberg and the Reformation cause. He died in communion with the Roman Church, but not in sympathy with it. His heart was with the reformers. If he had only possessed the courage to follow his convictions, instead of listening to his fears!

The second center of Humanist influence was the University of Erfurt, founded in 1378. The leader of the Erfurt group of Humanists was Conrad Mutianus Rufus, prebendary of Gotha. He was a Neo-Platonist, rather than a Christian, a brother in spirit and method to the Italian Humanists of whom Poliziano was so eminent an example. He was at heart not only hostile to the Church of his age, but indifferent to the Christian religion; nor did he take great pains to disguise this attitude. In later times he would have been called a Deist, or possibly an Agnostic. He wrote little, not at all for publication, mostly letters to his trusted friends. He was a teacher rather than a man of letters. He compared himself to Socrates—a comparison more flattering to him than to the great Athenian seeker after truth, for Mutian was rather a trifler than a seeker. He held that the Bible is full of paradoxes and riddles and metaphors. Truth is thus wrapped in mystery, and we should follow the example of Scripture and keep silence regarding the highest verities, or else present them under the cloak of fable and allegory, lest we cast our pearls before swine. Toward the Church, with its doctrines and sacraments, he was contemptuously indifferent. The mass he considered a waste of time; he rejected auricular confession as an impertinence; he called the monks "hooded monsters" and lenten fasting "fools' diet." By example he encouraged light jesting at all things held sacred by others. Under such

influence many of the younger Humanists became not only openly immoral in life, but irreligious scoffers at holy things.

It is customary to regard the monks of this time as mere Obscurantists, men opposed to the new learning because it was new, in their ignorance striving to repress all knowledge but the study of the Fathers. This was probably true of some monks, as of some who were not monks. There is Obscurantism at the present day; ignorant, besotted conservatism has never yet lacked representatives at any stage of the world's history. But the monks were not all opposed to learning; many were friendly to genuine enlightenment; and in the beginning of the Renaissance the monastic institutions showed marked tendencies toward taking the lead in the new movement. But the spirit of such men as Mutian was well fitted to bring the new learning under suspicion, and to furnish a plausible justification for the Obscurantists to maintain that Humanism was necessarily the foe of the Church and of religion.

Another member of the Erfurt school did much to strengthen this impression. Crotus Rubianus—which was the pretentious name assumed by Johann Jäger (1480–1540)—was twice rector of the university, and was renowned for his learning and wit, some of which fame he deserved. He was seriously lacking in moral earnestness, and opposed what he regarded as the corruptions of the Church, less because they were corruptions than because he found them inconvenient to himself. With others he wrote and published the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, next to the *Encomium Moriæ* of Erasmus perhaps the most famous satire of the age. It was read all over Europe with shouts of laughter, all the louder because some of the monks did not at first perceive the satire, and so gave their approval to the work as a learned defense of conservative views. The book consists of a series of letters, purporting to be written by various monks, full of barbarous Latin, ignorance, superstition, quibbling about abstruse and trivial theological questions, intolerance of the new learning, and general folly. The Obscurantists were thus held up to a scorn and ridicule more or less deserved, and the impression was sedulously conveyed to all readers that monks were invariably of this type. Luther gave the book only a faint and carefully qualified approval. Erasmus said the authors had gone too far, and what the author of the "Praise of Folly" thought was too far in the castigation of monks must be conceded to be very far indeed. Luther was much displeased by the irreligious spirit of the "Letters," though he was in no mood to defend the monks. It is rather difficult for us to understand the reason for the great popularity of the book, and particularly hard for us to comprehend why the sixteenth century thought it so funny. The humor seems to have mostly evaporated in these four hundred years. The jests that set all Europe in a roar

hardly provoke a faint smile now, which naturally suggests a query: Will our humor be better appreciated by posterity after a lapse of another four hundred years? In the twenty-fourth century will men hold their sides as they read Mark Twain? And will *Punch* and *Puck* seem funny papers to the men of that time?

A notable man of this age, who must be classed with the Erfurt group by affinity rather than by residence, was Ulric von Hutten. A man of the knightly order, who was in youth an involuntary monk, but escaped from the monastic life, and thereafter hated monks and monkery with inextinguishable hatred, he was a co-laborer with Crotus in producing the "Epistles of Obscure Men." Nothing gave him such delight as to ridicule the ignorance, stupidity and bigotry of the monks, and to expose their immorality. For this latter task his career in the world, as well as his experience in the monastery, admirably fitted him. He was himself as dissolute as the monks whom he attacked, and knew the ins and outs of the vice of his day through personal contact. When the Reformation came, Hutten gave Luther his enthusiastic support, but there was always this fundamental difference between them: Luther was a man of deep spiritual experience and intense moral earnestness; Hutten had no spiritual experience and little moral conviction. Hutten loved liberty, indeed, but by liberty he understood license to do what he pleased, and he favored reformation because he believed it would secure liberty. Luther loved the truth, and sought liberty to believe and teach the truth. The one was essentially a skeptical Humanist, the other was the religious reformer. Oil and water could mix as well as two such men, and Luther distrusted Hutten from the first. When Hutten took up the sword for the sake of the Gospel, as he announced, but really for his dying order, Luther emphatically repudiated him and his policy. The revolt of the knights failed and Hutten fled to Switzerland, where by Zwingli's intercession he was given refuge. The career of this stormy petrel of reform was over; he escaped the sword only to die of disease, induced by his dissolute life, passing away at Zürich in 1523. A man of more brilliant talents never made utter shipwreck of himself and a great career for lack of moral ballast.

A special interest attaches to this Erfurt group of Humanists from the fact that they were in their glory when Luther was a student at that university, and it might be presumed that he would be powerfully influenced by them. The presumption is sustained by no evidence; on the contrary, Luther is disclosed to us in his earliest writings as little affected by humanistic ideas. He is still in bondage to Aristotle and the medieval dialectic; he betrays no special acquaintance with the classics, particularly with Greek authors, and shows no enthusiasm for their study. In this

respect he is a violent contrast to Erasmus, and even to Zwingli, both of whom might without injustice be described as Humanists first and Christians afterwards. To Luther, from the beginning, religion was the one all-absorbing interest of life, and the Bible was the one form of literature—worthy of a study so intense as practically to exclude from serious attention all other forms of literature. He was not so much opposed to classical studies as indifferent to them. The Erfurt school did not have its customary influence on him; it not only did not undermine his respect for the Church, but this sentiment steadily increased in him, and until he had passed his thirtieth year there were few more devoted adherents of Rome than Luther.

The third center of humanistic influence was Nürnberg. There was no university here to furnish a bond of union, but a justly celebrated coterie of scholars and artists made this one of the foremost seats of the new learning. First among these may be reckoned Johann Müller, "the wonder of his time" (1435–1476). He was the most eminent student of mathematics and astronomy of the age, and the most famous writer on those subjects. He may be regarded as the restorer of scientific research, and by his popular lectures he did much to make generally known the results of the best scientific inquiry of his time. Müller established the first factory in Europe for making astronomical instruments, and built the first complete and scientifically appointed observatory. He was the first to calculate the size, distances and orbits of the planets. His accurate observations and calculations were of immense practical value to navigators, and it is not too much to say that without them the voyages of Columbus and other discoverers would have been impossible. To this comparatively unknown man, quite as much as to the daring seamen who used his results, we owe the greatest event in modern history, the discovery of a new world, with all its incalculable consequences.

A more famous man in his own day, though hardly a more useful, was Willibald Pirkheimer (1470–1530), of noble family, rich, renowned as jurist, statesman, orator, historian. His wealth and the friendship of Emperor Maximilian combined to make him perhaps the most influential Humanist of Germany. He was a man of considerable learning, and of still greater power of appreciating the learning of others, so that he was well fitted to become the German Mæcenas. His house was for many years the center of Humanism. He promoted the publication of learned works, especially editions of the Fathers, for which he often wrote prefaces and introductions. He defended Reuchlin in the controversy with Pfeffercorn, and it is believed that his powerful intercession turned the tide in the great scholar's favor. He admired and supported Luther

during the reformer's earlier work, but deserted the cause after the edict of Worms and from 1525 rapidly became more conservative. It is not correct to say that he returned to the Roman Church, for he had never left it, but one might say that he became once more loyal to that Church. He had been alarmed at the course that Luther was taking, for he was at bottom a conservative; but this is hardly the whole truth: he seems to have been lacking in genuine religious feeling, and possibly in moral courage also.

On the whole, the most celebrated citizen of Nürnberg, and one of the greatest men of his time, was Albert Dürer (1471–1528). Melanchthon said of him very truly that, though a great painter, this was one of the least of his accomplishments. He alone can dispute with Leonardo the palm of universal genius. He established art on scientific principles, perfecting the knowledge of linear perspective, and as a student of anatomy was the rival of Michelangelo. He excelled in arts that it never occurred to Leonardo to attempt, engraving and etching; and if he was not the inventor of the latter art, he was at least the first to bring it to something like perfection. He discovered and practiced the method of printing engravings in two colors, and thus laid the foundation for the modern art of chromo-lithography. To crown all, the writings he has left show clearly that if he had cared to devote himself seriously to expression of thought in words, he might have dethroned Erasmus and become the first man of letters of his age.

Dürer has left us a very interesting portrait of Erasmus, in the black and white in which he did his best work, and one regrets much that, notwithstanding his intimate acquaintance with Melanchthon, he seems never to have drawn or painted the great scholar's likeness. With Luther he had slight personal acquaintance, if any, but he highly respected the reformer and followed the course of the Reformation with an interest that was much more than intellectual curiosity. There is hardly any more moving passage in the literature of this period than the entry in his journal when the news reached him that Luther had been captured by a band of robbers on his return from Worms, and had probably perished. We, who are in the secret of that dramatic episode in Luther's career, can with difficulty understand the consternation of even the best friends of the Wittenberg professor when he thus disappeared. Dürer really believed that Luther would return no more and mourned for him as for one dead. The great Nürnberg artist was a man of sincere piety, of simple nature, and he rejoiced in the work of reformation and the prospect of a purified Church. Nor does he seem later to have been frightened into forsaking the good cause, possibly because he passed from the conflicts of earth before the supreme test came to the friends of reform.

One of the most influential of the Nürnberg men of letters was a Humanist by courtesy only. Hans Sachs (1494–1576) was a plain man, a shoemaker, learned in the lore of the people rather than in the classics. From 1510 to 1515 he traveled about Germany, working at his trade and accumulating knowledge that he afterwards laid under tribute for his writings. For this shoemaker was the most popular poet of the age, and is said before his death to have written over five thousand poems. He first gained the ear of the people by his publication of "The Wittenberg Nightingale," in 1523, in which, as might be inferred from the title, he celebrated the work of Luther as reformer. The poem had a wide circulation and a profound effect—the ideas of reformation were thus addressed to all classes and introduced to many people who perhaps could not have been persuaded to read a tract, still less a theological treatise. Sachs by no means confined himself to religious subjects, but took a wide range over all things that are of common interest to mankind. Like our Longfellow, he excels in the simple treatment of homely (and some would say trite) themes, and deserves to be called a household poet. After enjoying great fame in his lifetime, and in the generations immediately succeeding, Sachs fell into undeserved oblivion, from which he was rescued by Goethe, himself poet and critic enough to feel the charm of Sachs' simple verses. A new edition of his poems was published in 1776, and since then there have been numerous reprints and he has found many appreciative readers. Besides their naturalness, Sachs' poems are distinguished for their human feeling, their prolific invention, their wit, their descriptive powers. There was no such poet of the German people before his day; there has hardly been another since.

Other native literature of this age was mostly poetry; German prose was yet to be born, but in song people found expression for their thought. Songs on secular subjects, hymns on religious, were numerous and popular. The common impression that Luther invented German hymnology is, like so many common impressions, utterly wrong. In this case, the eulogists of Luther, perhaps ignorantly, have done their best to create and perpetuate this false notion. Luther seized upon an institution that he found in existence, and used it with all his musical talent and religious genius to promote the Reformation. For a time he succeeded in thrusting the secular songs into the background, and made his hymns take their place among the German people. Even the Roman Catholics sang *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*, as why should they not? since the sentiment is neither Roman nor Protestant, but Christian.

Such was, in brief, the intellectual state of Germany out of which the Reformation grew. It was a period of quickening into new life, the coming to self-consciousness of a great people. Hutten expressed the

thought of multitudes when he exclaimed, "Oh, what a century! Souls are waking! It is a joy to live!" [1]

II

THE sixteenth century witnessed a political revolution in Germany that may be described as the completion of a long-continued process of transformation of the Holy Roman Empire. The imperial theory had never been realized since the revival of the Empire under Charlemagne, but by the year 1500 theory and fact had come to be ludicrously at variance. Men continued to speak of a Holy Roman Empire, it is true, though already Voltaire's jibe was justified, and it was evidently not an empire, nor Roman, nor holy. For, instead of universal dominion, the ancient theory of *imperium*, the so-called Empire included but a fragment of Europe; it was German, not Roman; and its whole history was a denial of everything implied in the concept "holy." Imperial institutions were, in truth, but a vague tradition of past glories, not the actual basis of law and fact on which the political life of Germany rested. Yet the glamour of the past blinded men to present fact. Even in the sixteenth century, the title of Emperor was recognized throughout Europe as entitling its possessor to precedence and dignity over all other Christian rulers; but in the Empire itself, that is to say, in Germany, while there was still a degree of pride in the Emperor, there was no loyalty to him. This was partly the result of feudalism, a system under which every man was loyal to his immediate prince, and each prince was for himself.

During the great interregnum, the princes acquired an independent authority that was never lost, and the partial reconstitution of the Empire under Rudolf of Habsburg, in 1273, only checked them for a time in their career of self-aggrandizement and disunion. The real power of Germany was thenceforth that of the great princely houses, and of the Emperor one could only say, *Stat magni nominis umbra.* Such was made the fundamental law of the Empire, in the famous Golden Bull, which Charles IV promulgated in 1356, and by so doing fixed the imperial institution as it endured with little change to the Thirty Years' War. This bull, which is too commonly looked on as merely establishing the procedure in the election of an Emperor, is in fact the constitution of a federated monarchy, of strictly limited powers. It assures to the electoral princes an immunity of person equal to that of the Emperor himself, by making an attempt against the life of any one of them treason against the Empire. It grants to them privileges truly royal, such as the working of mines within their domains, the right to coin money, the levying of taxes, and judicial

[1] O welches jahrhundert! Die Geister erwachen! Es ist eine Lust zu leben!

rights over their own subjects, from which an appeal could be taken to the imperial courts only in case of a denial of justice. Thenceforth it was plain to all men that the Emperor could make good his claim to reign in Germany only as Brennus vindicated his authority in Rome, by throwing his sword into the scale.

The weakness of the Emperor lay in the fact that, while these great powers and immunities were conceded to the princes, he himself had no authority to levy taxes and no imperial army. While the princes might and did have their standing armies, the imperial force was only a militia made up of levies voted by the princes from time to time, for periods and purposes strictly prescribed. The Reichstag, or Diet, kept tight hold of the purse strings, and the princes jealously guarded the power of the sword—what could an Emperor so circumscribed be but a puppet? This lack of financial and military resources made it impossible for the nominal ruler to enforce even the shadow of authority that he still possessed, and the weakness of the imperial courts was a continual cause of well-founded complaint. If a suitor obtained a decision from them in his favor, it was still uncertain whether the process of the court would ever procure for him actual redress—in fact, it was morally certain that his adversary, if a person of any consequence, would prove strong enough to retain the profits of his wrong-doing and defy the imperial court.

This imperial impotence had culminated in the long reign of Frederick III (1440–1493), whose poverty and helplessness had made the title of Emperor almost despised. During nearly half of his reign he never appeared in Germany, and hardly made a pretense of interfering in its affairs, preferring to reside in Vienna, because the pears grown there were so delicious! It was the reign of King Log in very truth. His son and successor, Maximilian I, by a fortunate and romantic marriage with the richest heiress in Europe, Mary of Burgundy, became a great personage in his own right; but if the imperial dignity was, in consequence, a little more respected, the imperial power was very slightly increased. Maximilian spent his life in a fruitless struggle to arrest the disintegration of the Empire, but the sons of Zeruiah were too strong for him, and with his failure it became manifest that nothing could be done to stay the development of a princely oligarchy as the supreme power of the Empire.

The Diet was the only feature of the imperial government that possessed real vitality, and it was of comparatively recent origin. In the earlier history of the Empire, down to the fall of the Hohenstaufen, we find no such body. The Golden Bull provided for an annual meeting of the electoral princes, in order to assist the Emperor in his government; but as a matter of fact meetings were held only at long intervals, as the necessities of an increasingly weak administration compelled the Emperor

in emergencies to ask the princes for subsidies of both men and money. Gradually the custom became established of calling to this meeting the other nobles who had immediate sovereignty, and at length the right was recognized of all who held directly of the Emperor to attend and be consulted. The assembly was thus feudal in character, not representative. The only representative feature was that latest added: some time in the fifteenth century it became customary to invite the free imperial cities to send delegates, because their taxes could not be increased without their consent.

For a long time these Estates met as one body, but in the reign of Frederick III, at the meeting held at Nürnberg in 1467, the rule was definitely established that the Estates should thenceforth meet in three colleges or orders. The first consisted of the electoral princes: three ecclesiastics, the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne and Trier; and four secular princes, the King of Bohemia, the Duke of Saxony, the Count Palatine and the Margrave of Brandenburg. The second college was composed of the other ruling princes and nobles of the Empire, thirty-eight ecclesiastics and eighteen laymen, and certain of the more powerful knights. The third college was made up of the delegates of the free cities. These orders met together for some purposes, but deliberated and voted separately, and only measures that the first two had agreed upon were sent to the third for action. It does not appear that the vote of the third college had much weight, or was often sought, except in questions of the taxation of their own cities, in which their voice was necessarily decisive. However, the rights and proceedings of the three colleges is an obscure question; and the functions of the Diet itself were not precisely defined until the Treaty of Westphalia, in 1648. Enough to say that all of the more than three hundred separate principalities and communities that composed the Holy Roman Empire at the beginning of the sixteenth century were in some fashion represented in this body.

In a word, then, while all the other countries of Europe had arrived at a fair state of political order, the Empire was still in the condition of medieval anarchy. Germany was one people; it was not one nation. The Diet was a Congress, rather than a Parliament. When after infinite labor and prolonged discussion a decision was reached, there was no adequate means of enforcing it. The so-called decrees of the body were in fact merely advice, which the various States for the most part contemptuously disregarded. The great need was a strong executive. The inefficiency of the imperial courts compelled the settlement of serious difficulties by an appeal to arms. It was the constant complaint that Germany had no peace, and that justice could not be obtained. So far back as the day of Nicholas of Cusa this had been perceived, and that remarkable

statesman suggested the sole remedy: a standing army was necessary for the enforcement of judicial decisions; and the expense of such an army should be met by a special tax levied by the Diet. But to this policy the princes could not be brought to consent, for it was contrary to their settled policy of weakening the imperial authority to strengthen their own. The great ducal houses were willing to entrust the sword of empire only to hands too weak to wield it effectively, and thus they not only maintained, but continually increased, their own independence. There was then no single state, like the Prussia of to-day, so pre-eminent in power as to constitute it the natural political center of the nation, and entitle its ruling house to claim the dignity of hereditary Emperor. The Duchy of Austria, which came nearest to this position, fell just short of the necessary pre-eminence, and was not an integral part of Germany. Hence the medieval Empire lacked precisely what modern Germany has, a strong central government. It was a *Staatenbund*, not a *Bundesstaat*, and the Emperor possessed precisely such real power within the limits of the Empire as the Diet chose to grant him, and no more.

This transformation of the Empire, from a universal dominion with a single head whose will was the source of law, into the semblance of a federated monarchy of limited powers, but in reality into an oligarchy of princes with unlimited powers, was greatly promoted by the introduction of the Roman law and its remarkable extension during the latter half of the fifteenth century. The German law that had prevailed down to that age was like the English common law, an accretion of customs reaching back to a time, as Blackstone says, "whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." Much of it was unwritten, and still more was uncodified. It was favorable to individual liberty and communal rights, and the princes found it a serious obstacle to their policy of centralizing all power in their own hands. With a singular blindness to probable results, the emperors did their utmost to promote the introduction of the Justinian Code, possibly on the theory that a Roman Empire ought to be ruled according to Roman law, more likely because they hoped by this change to increase their own prerogatives. Accordingly, lawyers trained at Bologna, and other universities where the Roman law was taught, were appointed judges in the imperial courts, and they decided causes according to the principles and precedents of Roman law, not German. The princes followed the example thus set them, and by the sixteenth century nearly the whole legal fraternity were partisans and practitioners of the Justinian Code, while the ancient German law had fallen into disuse. The study of Roman law was introduced into the chief German universities, and attracted more students than other subjects. The Church was favorable to this change, since the canon law is largely

derived from the Roman codes, and, on the whole, the change promised to promote the interests of ecclesiastics.

Unspeakable confusion attended this new order of things in every rank of society. No man longer knew what his rights were. The rules for the tenure of property, for inheritance, for alienation, were entirely different under Roman law from those to which Germans had become accustomed by ages of undisputed usage. In particular, leases heretofore held in perpetuity were now transformed into leases for limited terms. Feudal rents in kind were altered to money rents, and in the process they were nearly always much increased. Lawsuits innumerable followed, the courts were choked with business, lawyers and notaries were busy as bees and fairly coined money—only the unfortunate litigants suffered, and few pitied them. In vain did the people protest against the unlawful exactions to which they were subjected, and the lawyers and court officers who preyed upon them. Sebastian Brant, in his famous satire "The Ship of Fools," printed in 1494, thus castigates the greedy lawyers of his day, comparing them to the robber knights: "The one steals in secret, the other openly; the one exposes his body to the storm, the other hides behind his inkstand. The knight burns all before him; the lawyer finds a well-to-do peasant, and with legal documents roasts him. . . . They corrupt the law to make a living." A sermon of the period contains these bitter words: "When I warn you to beware of usurers and those who would plunder you, I warn you also to beware of advocates, who now prevail. For the last twenty or thirty years they have increased like poisonous weeds, and are worse than the usurers, for they take away not only your money but your rights and honor. They have substituted a foreign code for the national one, and questions that used to be settled in two or three days now take as many months and years. What a pity the people cannot get justice as they did before they knew these liars and deceivers whom no one wanted."

The social importance of this great change can hardly be overestimated, but a political result quite unexpected came from it also; while all classes hoped for advantage from the introduction of the Roman law, the only class that did obtain any real advantage was the princes. On the whole, ecclesiastical authority was weakened by this new order of things, but the ruin of the imperial authority was made complete and irremediable. The princes, with much persistence and shrewdness, used the new law, in conjunction with the complete judicial rights granted them by the Golden Bull, to reduce the functions of the imperial courts to the lowest possible limit. Their own power was vastly increased and consolidated, and both Emperor and Church suffered a proportional weakening of their sovereignty.

III

THE migrations of the Teutons resulted in a selection of the courageous, enterprising elements of the original stock to propagate their kind; and also necessitated constant fighting with opposing peoples, which bred a habit of violence and aggression. The Teuton became proud, self-reliant, individualistic. He became a social being through his intelligence rather than through his emotions. He saw the advantages of good order, rather than instinctively rejoiced in the fellowship of his kind. Society and social institutions were less necessary to him than useful. His environment—struggle with a stern climate, habits of drink, diseases to which he was subject—made another selection: the temperate and frugal survived the reckless and drunken. A strong, sober race, that, by virtue of mental and physical characteristics, took a foremost place in the development of Europe, were the people among whom the Reformation began.

Germany was naturally a poor land, but in the sixteenth century it had become relatively rich; indeed, its wealth placed it in the foremost rank of European countries. Its agricultural resources were great; its manufactures were varied in character and in volume large; its commerce was vast, profitable and rapidly increasing. The richest mines in Europe at this time were in Saxony, in Freiberg, Marienberg, Schreckenstein, Schneeberg, Annaberg. The most important mine in Thuringia was at Mansfeld. These mines yielded principally silver and copper, with some gold. The ores were often sent to Venice to be reduced, and the product was exchanged for merchandise imported from the East. Erfurt, Leipzig, Nürnberg and Augsburg especially profited by the traffic thus built up. The mining districts produced little save their metals; their food and clothing must all be imported, besides much wood for smelting, propping up the mines, and the like. The Saxon princes drew so large revenues from these mines that they were able to tax their subjects more lightly than many other rulers, and in consequence the population and wealth of Saxony gained at the expense of other parts of the Empire. It was not merely accident that caused the Reformation to begin in Saxony, and spread thence through Germany.

Until late in the fifteenth century, German social institutions were yet in the main feudal. There were still three chief classes among the people: the clergy, the nobles and the peasants. The legal basis of society remained in the land, and a man's social status was determined by the tenure on which he occupied his portion of land. No way of living having been yet discovered except by occupying land, the law of tenure necessarily fixed every man's legal and economic rights. The cities, to be sure, with

their burgher guilds, were an exception; they were making another class, as yet with imperfect recognition and with rights in many respects ill-defined.

But land had nevertheless ceased to be the only basis of wealth; it was no longer even the principal basis of wealth. The ultimate source of production it, of course, was then and must always be, but manufactures and commerce had so advanced that land had ceased to be the economic basis of society. A vast economic change was in progress; Europe was undergoing a transformation from the agricultural to the capitalistic system, and this great economic mutation was producing a portentous social fermentation. The sixteenth century was the culmination of a process of economic readjustment that had begun two centuries before, and has continued by fresh stages to our own day. That age witnessed the breaking up of feudalism and the reconstitution of society on a different basis. Commerce became capitalized, and to some extent manufactures also; though the complete capitalization of industry remained to be completed after the invention of machinery at the close of the eighteenth century. The Reformation occurred in the midst of this beginning of modern capitalism. Large fortunes were already amassed or in process of amassing by individuals, by families, and by companies formed for trade—those first attempts at combinations of capital on a large scale that gradually led to the modern corporation and the Trust. This growth of the artisan and merchant class in numbers and wealth had a great effect on all the social and political institutions of Europe, an effect especially marked in Germany by the rapid development of the free imperial cities.

The city was the new economic unit of the changed social conditions, and economically considered, Europe was coming to consist of a system of city States. Within the cities the chief instrument by which this new order was developing was the guild, which was to the medieval artisan or merchant all that the trades union is to-day, and much more. Many of the guilds had features that allied them to the modern Masonic order and all corresponded closely in some of their activities to the numerous benevolent orders that have sprung up in the United States and flourished like Jonah's gourd in the last half century. The guild not only existed for the mutual protection and advancement of the members of a craft, but from a common fund help was given to needy members in sickness or temporary loss of employment. As these guilds increased in numbers and wealth, they naturally sought a share in the government of their town. In some of the cities, like Ulm, Frankfurt and Nürnberg, the controlling interest remained aristocratic, and the patricians took precedence of the burghers, but the latter were able to make good their claim to a

share of the power, and the original rule that only members of the oldest families were eligible to the Rath, or town council, had to be modified. In most of the towns, the guilds were the ruling powers, the council being composed of the guild masters, or the heads of the various organized crafts.

It became absolutely necessary for the security of a town and its business that it should have a charter, vesting in it certain rights and privileges, and clearly specifying the duties to be performed by it. Gradually there developed a class of free cities, owing allegiance directly to the Emperor, and by him being assured of freedom from oppression by princes and great nobles. These cities had come to be very numerous in Germany, and constituted practically independent republics, so far at least as their own internal affairs were concerned. In the Rhine and Swabian district there were over a hundred of these cities, among which were: Aachen, Speyer, Worms, Frankfurt, Strassburg, Colmar, Basel, Bern, Zürich, Schaffhausen, Constance, St. Gall, Ueberlingen, Ravensberg, Kempten, Kaufbeuren, Donauwörth, Boffingen, Memmingen, Augsburg, Ulm, Tottweil, Reutligen, Weil, Esslingen, Heilbronn, Wimpfen, Halle, Nördlingen. Franconia had only half a dozen, of which Nürnberg was the chief. In Bavaria the one city of Regensburg stood practically alone, save for Augsburg. In Saxony were Lübeck, Bremen, Magdeburg, Hamburg and Gosler. In Thuringia were found Erfurt, Mühlhausen, Nordhausen. In Westphalia were Hildesheim, Minden, Osnabrück, Münster and Düsseldorf. And alongside of these free cities were a considerable number that were nominally ruled by a bishop or archbishop, but nevertheless enjoyed a practical independence; not to mention a third class of cities, like Dresden and Leipzig, where the court of a prince was maintained, which nevertheless had to a considerable extent the same internal government and similar civic privileges. Holding directly of the Emperor, the free cities were far more loyal to him than the princes, and did much to keep the imperial spirit alive.

The volume of German commerce controlled by these towns, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, would seem quite respectable even in these days of great enterprises. Ulm, according to Wimpheling, estimated its annual trade at over half a million florins, while that of Augsburg and Nürnberg was much greater. The most important commercial route was by way of Venice, Augsburg or Nürnberg, Strassburg and Cologne. These and other German towns were also the centers of important manufactures, and their products went to swell the volume of this trade. In 1466 there were 743 master-weavers in Augsburg; and at about the same time, 200,000 bolts of linen were woven in a single year at Ulm. Tanners, furriers and shoemakers were also flourishing guilds, and their products were famous throughout Europe. Iron and metal

workers are found in these and other towns in greatest profusion, and the variety of product in these lines is hardly greater to-day than it was then.

At the same time another influence was at work that was greatly to change the relative importance of this commercial route, and seriously affect the cities that shared in such prosperity. The search for new routes to India that led Columbus to the discovery of the New World was caused by the advance westward of the Turks, and their interference with the old paths of commerce with the East. By the discoveries that followed, and the accompanying development of the art of navigation, the commercial center of Europe was transferred from Italy to the Atlantic coast, and Spain and France, and in still greater measure the Netherlands and England, profited by this change. This was in itself a great economic revolution, and its effects on the progress of the Reformation are almost incalculable.

But in the sixteenth century, the effects of this change were only beginning to be felt, and the German cities were still among the most famous in Europe. Nürnberg was not only a center of humanistic culture, but as the home of art it vied with Florence, as a mart of trade with Venice. Augsburg was as much the center of European finance as London is to-day, though its banking houses and capital were later to be transferred to Antwerp, and the Fuggers of Augsburg were the sixteenth-century Rothschilds. This strong house, which had come up from the humblest beginnings until it ranked with the high nobles of the Empire, financed emperors, princes and prelates, and held in its hands the issues of peace and war, as the great bankers of Europe do to-day. It was certain that these free towns would play a large part in the Reformation drama, and we shall see that they ultimately decided its course. It would be quite within the truth to say that the success of any attempt at reform in the Empire would depend on their attitude toward it.

On every hand we find in the medieval literature tributes to the wealth and luxury that Germany was attaining through this growth of capitalism and the development of her free cities. Æneas Sylvius (afterwards Pope Pius II) about the middle of the fifteenth century was much struck by this condition of Germany, so far surpassing the state of Italy: "The German nation takes the lead of all in wealth and power, and one can say with truth that God has favored this land beyond others. On all sides one sees cultivated plains, cornfields, vineyards, flower and vegetable gardens in town and country; everywhere grand buildings, walled cities, well-to-do farmsteads in the plains and valleys, castles on the mountain heights." Elsewhere he comes down to particulars after this fashion: "How is it that in your inns you always serve drinks in silver vessels?

Where is the woman (I do not speak of the nobility, but of the bourgeoisie) who does not glitter with gold? What profusion of gold and pearls, ornaments, reliquaries!" Even natives were sufficiently impressed by the luxury of their country to record it. Wimpheling writes: "It was not an uncommon thing to eat off gold and silver plates at the merchants' tables, as I myself did in company with eleven other guests in the city of Cologne."

A not too vividly imaginative reader easily perceives the ill-concealed tone of envy that breathes through such testimonies to the wealth of the German burgher class. Trade was held in low esteem, not merely by the nobility, but by the Church and the educated class. It was rated lower than agriculture and the handicrafts by those who despised all alike, on the ground that merchants were less honest than farmers or artisans. The merchant guilds were denounced much as the trusts are to-day. The Diet of Cologne, in 1572, passed an edict against them, in effect anticipating the Sherman law of our day, in a like vain hope of resisting an economic evolution. It was a fact that the burghers and their trade flatly antagonized much of the medieval ethics, and this explains the opposition to them. To buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest, and to tax the traffic all it will bear, would have been maxims abhorrent to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, although the commerce of the age was founded on these as yet unformulated principles. The religious and ethical teaching of that time insisted that to take advantage of the necessity of a fellow creature, whether done by buyer or seller, was contrary to justice, and such procedure was forbidden under severe penalties. This was especially true of food and clothing, and the necessaries of life generally, which all but merchants believed should be sold for "fair" prices. The merchant believed, and so far as the laws would permit practiced, that he should receive for his goods whatever he could get for them. It is the constant complaint in the literature of the time that the sumptuary laws had broken down and no longer could be enforced, or at least that they no longer were enforced, that greed was everywhere triumphing over justice, that the poor were being exploited to make the merchant class rich.

Erasmus therefore represented the general opinion of the mercantile class when he said: "Merchants are the vilest and most contemptible of men; they carry on the most despicable of all industries, and that moreover in the meanest fashion; and though they lie, perjure themselves, steal, cheat, and in every way impose on others, they set themselves up everywhere as the first of the land—which, indeed, their wealth enables them to do. A merchant would not succeed in growing very rich if he applied his conscience to the question of usury and rascality." The real offense of

the merchant appears to have been that he was rich, while the noble and the scholar only wished to be rich.

But it was not merely as merchants that the burghers were hated and denounced; it was as bankers and lenders of money, as the capitalistic class of Germany. Wimpheling bewails the growth of capitalism in his day: "Usury is cruel and much practiced by the Jews, as well as by many Christians, who are worse than the Jews. It is impossible to dispense with the exchange of money, and the lender has the right to some profit, but usury and money-lending are the ruin of a nation. Woe the day when the reins fell into the hands of wealth, and gold began to beget ever more and more gold." We must bear in mind, in reading such words, that during this period "usury" means, not the taking of excessive interest alone, but the taking of any interest. That there was good ground for opposition to excessive interest is apparent when we read that the municipality of Frankfurt once paid 52 per cent. for a loan of a thousand florins; and that interest at times went as high as 86 per cent. at Augsburg.

In spite of such social prejudice the process of accumulating capital went on with great rapidity in the sixteenth century. The people were slow to perceive that conditions had changed, and that money had acquired a new social significance and so a revision of ethical standards was required. Lending before the sixteenth century had been mainly for unproductive consumption, for war and for extravagant expense. Lending was now for use of money in business, with a prospect, almost a certainty, of profit. Usury had formerly been an exaction of that for which the borrower had received no real equivalent, from which at any rate he had derived no profit; it was now a sharing of profits between borrower and lender. As money borrowed was seen to be productive, to return a profit to the borrower, the prejudice against interest gradually disappeared, yet throughout the sixteenth century men continued to apply the ethical principles of a former age to the new conditions that they no longer fitted.

The Church fully sustained the nobles and scholars in their opposition to the growing money-lending power. The canon law forbade all usury, and for ages the civil law enforced the ecclesiastical. But the increasing demands of capital for commerce broke down the civil prohibitions, which were becoming obsolete. The law could annoy the merchant, but it could no longer bind him. The Church, however, continued to denounce usury and to refuse absolution to those guilty of it, and here we find one of the prime causes of the growing hostility between the cities with their mercantile classes and the Church. The Church also favored the sumptuary laws, by which it had been attempted to regulate extravagance and to prevent oppression, through statutes that prescribed what might be

bought and consumed by various classes and the prices at which articles might be sold. As this legislation tended to restrict trade, it was hated by the traders.

The cities had therefore a powerful motive to revolt against a Church that was so hampering their growth. But this was not their whole grievance. The Church was the passive foe, as well as the active, of commerce in the sixteenth century. It had locked up in its great landed estates and vast buildings an immense amount of capital that was sorely needed in a more liquid form for the enlargement of commercial enterprises. Commerce was beginning to feel the absolute necessity of large capital and of credit. The Church took from the people, every year and in various ways, more than all the governments of Europe; and what it thus gained was to a large degree a permanent loss, because it was invested in comparatively nonproductive property. By thus diminishing capital and opposing credit the Church was the chief obstacle in the way of the commercial and capitalistic evolution that was so rapidly progressing. This economic stimulus to revolt was none the less powerful from the circumstance that the cities were not conscious of its effect; they struck out blindly against what they felt, rather than knew, to be their chief antagonist, when the time came that a successful blow could be struck.

It was natural that the cities should seek recognition in the political affairs of the Empire in some way proportioned to their social power of wealth. In this their success was not at first striking. The Golden Bull forbade the formation of confederacies within the Empire, without the consent of the Emperor and princes, nevertheless a league of the Swabian towns[1] was concluded in 1376 to resist the encroachments of Charles IV. An association of nobles was formed the same year, and in the struggle that followed the towns were badly worsted (1388) and lost some part of their privileges, which they were slow in recovering. The cities gradually obtained representation in the Reichstag, as we have seen, but beyond control of their own taxation they had little weight in that body. At the Diet of Nürnberg, in 1522, they protested that they had no real voice in affairs, since they were always overruled by the other orders, but the satisfaction of protesting was practically all that they gained. That they were already the superior force in the Empire, by virtue of their wealth, was doubtless the fact, but the extreme conservatism of Germany postponed political recognition of this fact. This dissatisfaction of the cities with their political status was one of the most serious elements in the general condition of unrest that we discover at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

[1] This should not be confused with either of the several later associations bearing the same name, especially the great Swabian league, formed in 1488 at Esslingen, by princes, nobles and towns, for the enforcement of peace and good order.

A class very seriously affected by the new social conditions were the knights, or lesser nobility. Holding their fiefs directly of the Emperor, these descendants of the officers in the early imperial armies of Charlemagne and his successors were always a turbulent lot. They were at constant feud among themselves and with the cities. They made continual war on each other for the sake of revenge, and they warred against the towns for the sake of plunder. The towns, on their part, punished the marauders as they could, and often hanged them incontinently when caught. The first Reichstag of Maximilian's reign attempted to abate these evils by sanctioning an imperial edict (1495) that forbade private war, which was little else than piracy on land, but the edict had slight effect. Nearly another century was required to make the prohibition operative, and in the meantime the knights had virtually perished. At the beginning of the Reformation private war, though illegal, flourished throughout the Empire.

The poverty of the knights intensified this struggle, and by the year 1500 it was a poverty keenly felt by the larger part of the order. The class that had risen by success in war found themselves out of joint with a social order based on wealth and demanding peace as the prime condition of its well-being. The claims of long descent were more and more disallowed; men were beginning to ask what the knight was doing for the society from which he demanded so much. Money was coming to be the measure of value. The old feudal society had little need of money. Rents and taxes were paid in kind, and for the rest barter served; but a craftsman must be paid in good hard coin or he would not work; a merchant must have money counted down, or he would not part with his wares. The need of money was therefore increasingly felt by all classes in the sixteenth century, but more especially by the landed aristocracy, which had hitherto been able to supply their wants from their own estates. To this social change the knight was fiercely opposed. As compared with any other class he desired at least

> to be deemed
> Equal in strength, and rather than be less
> Cared not to be at all.

Also the growth of wealth and luxury in the towns had developed new wants among the nobility, which the wealthier among them were able to gratify, while the poorer struggled desperately to do the same. The knights, living in castles whose construction had sacrificed everything else to security, lacking most of what we should consider the ordinary comforts and decencies of life, saw the burghers living in houses that were in comparison sybaritic, resplendent in luxury and crowded with costly works of art. The knight's wife and daughters saw the womenfolk of the

burghers flaunting silks and velvets and jewels fit for princesses and coveted the like for themselves. It is true that medieval sumptuary laws forbade burghers to wear pearls and velvet, these being reserved for ladies of noble birth, but the prohibitions were often disregarded. And even when the laws were obeyed, the wives and daughters of burghers could wear silks and diamonds, while the noble lady but too often had to go without her pearls and velvet for lack of money to buy them. It is scarcely wonderful that neither was fully satisfied. The burgher's womenfolk resented being deprived of ornaments that they could well afford, while noble ladies felt even more keenly their deprivation of that which they could not afford, but had been taught to consider their birthright. The attempt of the knight to rival the burgher in this luxurious splendor within and this sumptuous display without—attempts all the more eager and determined, because the knight looked on the burgher as his inferior and tried to despise one whom in his heart he envied—only led to more speedy and hopeless impoverishment and made impending ruin a certainty.

To raise money for these extravagances, many knights mortgaged their estates to the money-lending syndicates of the towns, which had become numerous and powerful, or to Jewish usurers. Of course the debts were never paid, and when the creditor foreclosed, as he was usually compelled to do in order to recover his loan, instead of blaming their own reckless improvidence and rash extravagance, the unfortunates complained bitterly of the hard-hearted wretches who presumed to insist that a noble should pay his debts like another. The very laws conspired to bring the lesser nobility to want. For, while Germany had its law of primogeniture, like other European nobilities, it was much less strict. All of a noble's children were noble, and his estates were not entailed; so that the constant multiplication of titles and the subdivision of territories and estates, by equal division among sons and to make marriage portions for daughters, reduced all but a few great houses to comparative poverty and impotence.

At the same time that the knights were thus doing their best to accomplish their own downfall, there befel them a misfortune that they could have done nothing either to foresee or avert. This was a military revolution, a radical change in the art of war consequent on the invention of gunpowder. Before the musket, the knight's armor of steel proved as worthless for defense as his lance and two-handed sword were for offense; and the cannon battered down about his ears his hitherto impregnable castles, which before this new weapon were no better than cardboard houses. The social position and political weight of the knights had been won and maintained by their military prowess; throughout the middle

ages the strength of armies had depended on the cavalry,[1] the body of knights panoplied in steel and invulnerable to the weapons of the foot soldier. This invincible cavalry was now being replaced on the field by infantry, composed of burghers and peasants, thoroughly trained and disciplined. The feudal militia was giving place to standing armies, largely composed of mercenaries, officered by soldiers of fortune—rascally swashbucklers and cutpurses, most of them, but stout fighters. War was becoming a profession, not the occupation of a gentleman in his leisure hours. The robber knight, perched in his inaccessible rocky eyrie, levying tribute on all who traveled the roads, waging private warfare at his will, and bidding the whole world defiance, was an anachronism. He was dead, in fact, though not yet conscious of it, and his burial had become a social necessity. Lowell had the right idea when he said,

> But civlyzation doos git forrid
> Sometimes upon a powder-cart.

But probably the greatest sufferers of all from the social revolution were the peasants. Up to the middle of the fifteenth century their lot had been by no means a hard one. Considerable land was then in the hands of peasant proprietors, and lay between the estates of the nobles. In addition to these freehold properties, many peasants held land on what was virtually a perpetual lease, the right descending from father to eldest son as regularly as the inheritance of a noble. The Church had also sublet its land to peasants. Many peasants were, it is true, still *adscripti glebæ*, that is, they could not leave their holdings without the consent of their lords, but they were free in person and their children were free. Peasants who had no holdings of their own were obliged to labor for others for stated wages, or else seek some other means of livelihood. The burghers, especially the craftsmen, were mainly recruited from the brighter and more enterprising sons of peasants. Sometimes the nobles attempted to prevent this drifting of the surplus rural population to the cities, but with little success.

The peasant paid his rents in kind. As grain was the most important product, the lord was entitled to every third sheaf. The principle appears to have been that one sheaf was reckoned as the cost of production, and the surplus was equally shared between lord and farmer. A share less accurately defined was due to the lord from the increase of the flocks, herds and poultry. A "death-tax" of the best head or chattel was exacted. Personal service to the lord was also required, but it was exactly limited, and seldom exceeded twelve days' labor in the year. On the whole,

[1] The one exception was the English army. The battles of Crecy and Agincourt were won by the archers, who with their cloth-yard shafts were not less effective against armored knights than was the early musketry.

therefore, the peasant was little worse off, if any, than the ordinary tenant-farmer without capital among us, who takes a farm and works it "on shares."

Besides their holdings, there were certain tracts of land, the Marks or commons, in which the peasant had his equitable rights. He could cut wood and graze his cattle there. His swine could be turned in to eat the falling acorns. These commons had come down from the ancient tribal days in Germany, when all land was held in common, and these rights were jealously defended and highly prized. In some cases, a small rental had to be paid for them, but they were never denied.

The German peasantry had some pretensions to scientific agriculture, and practiced rotation of crops. Large parts of the land were devoted to the culture of the vine, and the wines of Germany were renowned and much sought after. So were its fruits, especially cherries and apples, which were grown in large quantities and are often mentioned in the literature of the period. Dairying was another profitable industry, and German cheese was even then an article of export throughout Europe. Forestry was already an art, if not a science, and there were strict rules for the felling of all sorts of trees, while reforestation was regularly practiced. The good order and cleanliness of the housekeeping is witnessed by several English travelers of the time as being far in advance of what was known in their own country, excelled nowhere but in the Netherlands.[1]

The clothing of these peasants was good, even rich, especially the one Sunday costume, which it was a point of honor for everyone to possess, and to wear also on fête days and special occasions, as is the custom to-day. The people were not only well fed but well clothed. They had an abundance of meat and other good food. Wine was drunk as freely among them as tea and coffee with us. The wages of a day laborer for a week would buy him a sheep and a pair of shoes, or a good suit of clothes. A day's wages would be the equivalent of half a bushel of rye, or three quarters of a bushel of oats, a bushel of turnips or six to seven pounds of meat. The earnings of three weeks would buy a good cow. From these samples of the purchasing power of his wages, it will be seen that the man of the fifteenth century who could bring to the labor market nothing but a strong pair of hands was about as well off as his brother among us.

But a great change in the lot of the peasants was taking place as the sixteenth century opened. There had been such a sharp rise of prices as we have experienced in the United States since 1900, amounting to an increase of fifty per cent. in the average cost of living, while wages, which

[1] A spirited and on the whole fairly accurate picture of the social state of Europe in the fifteenth century, including Germany, is given in the well-known historical romance of Charles Reade, "The Cloister and the Hearth."

were then fixed by law, had remained stationary. Economists are practically agreed that this rise of prices after 1500 was due to the depreciation of silver. This was not caused, however, as some writers have urged, by the importation of silver from America—the great flood of American bullion came later—but by increased production at home. The Fuggers and other capitalists obtained control of long-unworked silver mines, in the Tyrol and elsewhere, from 1487 onward, and exploited them to the utmost. The Fuggers are said by one in their employ to have increased their capital 13,000,000 florins in seven years; but we have no data for an estimate of the percentage of this increase that should be credited to their mining operations, though no doubt it was large. The Bohemian mines, which had been closed during the Husite wars, were reopened in 1492, and thenceforth poured out a large and steady flood of silver. Whatever the cause, the result was great distress among the peasants, and of course much dissatisfaction when they compared their want with the apparent plenty of other classes.

But even worse than this was the disturbance of their status caused by the already noted introduction of the Roman law. Under this law peasants were excluded from the tribunals. No such class as peasants existed in the Rome of the Cæsars, and there was therefore no provision for them in the law. The Justinian Code practically recognizes but two classes: nobles and slaves. With this extension of the Roman law and the practical disuse of the ancient German law of custom, the peasants were more and more reduced to the footing of slaves, to whom no redress of wrongs was possible. They were deprived of their ancient communal rights. The nobles seized upon their marks, and forbade the peasants to graze their animals there or to cut a stick of timber. Those who had held property on life leases were evicted, or compelled to exchange their holdings for short-term leases, always with increased rents. Peasants were now forbidden to kill game, even the small animals that destroyed their crops, or to catch fish. Any peasant found off the paths or carrying a weapon was liable to be deprived of both eyes. He was not only not permitted to kill the game himself, but was even compelled to assist his lord to hunt it, either by personal service or by furnishing wagons and horses as they might be requisitioned. In endless ways, what he had good reason to regard as his immemorial rights were now constantly infringed, and that without remedy.

No wonder uprisings of the peasants began to occur during the closing decades of the fifteenth century, and we shall not be surprised to meet such troubles in the course of our study of the Reformation. The *Bundschuh*, or laced boot of the peasant, was their standard, and it had been several times displayed, always with disorder and bloodshed, before the Refor-

mation began. We are thus forewarned against the error of many historians, who have identified with the Reformation movement this resistance offered by the peasants to their oppressors, and we can see in it merely the act of men driven to desperation by their wrongs. We shall not imagine that Luther, or any other religious teachers, were responsible for outbreaks that the greed and lawlessness of the ruling classes had provoked. At the same time we shall also be prepared to find that the Reformation was seriously affected by this social struggle.

IV

In the Church a revolution was impending, as well as in society and the State, but the nature of that revolution could not be clearly forecasted. The signs of the times, as seen in the current literature, have been much misread even by later students and historians, with far better opportunities to interpret them correctly. Protestants especially are prone to exaggerate the disaffection of the people with the Church, so long as it exercised only its legitimate functions, as the spiritual guide and teacher of men, as distinguished from the abuses of the ecclesiastical machine. We underrate, because we ourselves have never felt, the hold on the imagination maintained by the medieval Church through its vast and imposing unity. We underrate, because we have never fully comprehended, the appeal made to the highest and best in man by the theory of the Roman Catholic Church.

According to its teaching, Christ established the Church as the means of men's salvation, and outside of her there is no assurance of safety. Augustine might teach that we may charitably hope for the salvation of the unbaptized and of heretics, but most medieval theologians held that outside of the Church all were irretrievably lost. To this Church were committed those sacraments which, when dispensed by a duly ordained priesthood, were the channels of divine grace, and became effective as *opus operatum*, by their own inherent efficiency, irrespective of the faith or spiritual fitness of the recipient. By baptism men were regenerated, by confirmation they were admitted to the full privileges and duties of Christians, by penance they were freed from the penalties of sin, in the eucharist they were nourished by the very body and blood of the Christ who died for them, through extreme unction they were prepared for the inevitable end that awaits all.[1]

Over this Church, entrusted with these holy mysteries, Christ had himself set Peter and his successors, and had given to them the keys of heaven

[1] These sacraments were obligatory on every Christian, while matrimony and orders, though equally sacred and as truly channels of divine grace, were optional.

and hell, making them his vicegerents, to whom all men owe obedience as to Christ himself, in all things spiritual. And to this Church so organized he had given infallibility, since he had promised by his Spirit to lead his followers into all the truth. Whatever the whole Church taught, therefore, through its ecumenical councils, was the voice of God himself, and must be fully believed and obeyed. To doubt what the Church approved was impiety, to resist its authority was to fight against God. That the Pope, as head of the Church, was also an infallible teacher, though this was widely believed and by some strenuously maintained, was as yet only reckoned to be a "pious opinion," and by some of the great doctors of the Church, notably by Thomas Aquinas, it had been questioned.

To be cut off from this Church was therefore the greatest misfortune that could befall a man, for excommunication deprived him of all access to grace and left him an orphan in the world. To cut himself off from this Church, that is, to be guilty of schism, was the greatest crime that a Christian could commit. The greatest but one, it should rather be said, for the sin of sins was to deny the teaching of the Church, to become a heretic. And deliberately to teach false doctrine to others was to be as much worse than a murderer, as to kill the soul is worse than to kill the body. Schism, therefore, was punished by excommunication and the loss of civil rights, but heresy was extirpated by fire and sword, without mercy and without respite.

Not even with the grave did the Church lose its hold on men, rather it tightened its grip on men through their belief in a future life. For, by its doctrine of purgatory, of the intercession of saints, of the possibility of the release of souls from torture through the intercession of the Church, so that those so favored could pass from this place of suffering at once to Paradise, the Church riveted the last and most effective link in the chain to bind men's souls into complete and abject submission. Bold indeed must be the spirit, lost to all fear of consequences in time and eternity, that could resist an authority so awful, grounded in such teaching, defended by such terrors.

Not content with these spiritual resources, however, the Church had fortified her power with every worldly advantage. She was not only omnipotent but omnipresent. The hand of the Church was on every enterprise, to guide and control it. The man of the sixteenth century could not gaze anywhere, could not turn himself around, without meeting evidences of the power of the Church. Wherever his eye fell, in town or city, her towering spires and vast piles of stone spoke eloquently of her power. Great monasteries were found in every important city, and the monks swarmed everywhere like bees. Churchmen, or men trained by the

Church, filled the courts of law and all offices of administration. A man could not make his will, buy or sell a piece of land, or make a legal contract, but that the necessary documents must be drawn up by an ecclesiastic, or at any rate be witnessed by a notary appointed by the Church. The universities were largely officered by Churchmen, and with few exceptions their teaching was controlled by the Church. The press was striving to break away from Church control, but as yet with imperfect success, for no book could be lawfully printed without ecclesiastical sanction. The enforcement of this law was indeed evaded, and was becoming increasingly difficult. In fact, there lay one of the chief possibilities of reformation.

And the Church was powerful through her vast wealth. The German Church was reckoned the richest in Christendom. One third of the landed property was estimated to be in her possession, and her income from all sources was enormous. The great archbishoprics exceeded in revenues the incomes of the richest secular princes, and excited at once their envy and their greed. Probably these Sees would have been despoiled on some pretext, long before the sixteenth century, had they not been made the appanages of the princely families without spoliation. But while this policy had secured for the Church thus far the safe possession of its great wealth, and had promoted the ambition of a few families, it had alienated the people. One of the sources of the Roman Church's power has always been its union of a certain democratic spirit with its aristocratic form; there has been possibility of promotion of the poorest, according to the measure of his abilities. The present Pope is the son of an Italian peasant, and while many of his predecessors have come from noble families, all through the centuries there have been Pontiffs who boasted no higher lineage than Pius X. Nowhere but in Germany was it impossible for one not of noble birth to rise to high position among the secular clergy—only in the monasteries could the poor look for recognition and promotion, and they were not certain of advancement even there, for the richest foundations became also the prey of the nobility.

This power of the Church through its wealth and noble connections had been greatly lessened by the frightful corruption that had come to prevail in its administration. One of the commonest evils was that of pluralities. Thus the archbishop of Mainz was at the same time archbishop of Magdeburg and bishop of Halberstadt, the archbishop of Bremen was also bishop of Verdun, and so on. It is plain to one who reads the history of medieval Germany with understanding eyes, that the real gainer in the long contest between Pope and Emperor, of which Canossa was the most dramatic episode and the Concordat of Worms the nominal conclusion,

was neither Emperor nor Pope, but the German nobility. They insinuated themselves into the great ecclesiastical fiefs, and even all the canonries and valuable benefices, leaving to the poor only the lower ranks of the clergy and the poorer livings. These noble ecclesiastics had a double interest in resisting imperial authority and promoting the disintegration of the Empire. The effect of such usurpation by the nobility was to concentrate great revenues and great power in the hands of a small class, while the lower clergy, with stipends merely nominal, were left in an incredible state of poverty, ignorance and immorality, with little effective supervision or control. Besides this, the nobles had their younger sons appointed to the richest benefices while they were yet mere boys, and their example was followed by all who had any influence, until a large part of the desirable posts in the Church were nominally held by those incapable of performing their duties. These enjoyed the revenues, and from them doled out a mere pittance to inferior clergy, who were glad to do the work rather than starve. This was the case throughout Europe. John Calvin, one of the chief heroes of the Reformation, held two French benefices which his thrifty father had managed to secure for him, for which he never gave the slightest equivalent to the Church in service; and it was by their aid that he pursued his studies at the universities of Paris and Orleans. And this ornament of the Protestant faith did not resign his benefices until two years after he had rejected the doctrines of the Catholic Church and had been doing his best to propagate the evangelical or Protestant doctrine, one year before the publication of his "Institutes." The ethical standards of the time may be measured by this: none of his contemporaries, Catholic or Protestant, mentions these facts to his discredit or reproaches him with any dishonor. That this possession of great sums of money, for which they made little or no pretense of rendering service, was a constant temptation to ecclesiastics to indulge in the luxury, drunkenness and licentiousness with which they were universally charged, is obvious. That there should have been an occasional pious prelate, in spite of such conditions is, indeed, little short of a miracle.

The most eloquent pen of a modern writer could not draw such a picture of the general depravity of the Church administration as is drawn by the dry catalogue of abuses contained in the *Centum Gravamina.* And that document is not the rhetorical exaggeration of a Protestant polemic, but the sober and well-considered complaints of men still loyal to the Roman Church, and intending to remain loyal, who are but demanding redress of grievances that had come to be intolerable. Let everyone who would form a mental picture of what the Church was, in the sixteenth century, in the actual conduct of its affairs, from sources of unquestion-

able authenticity, read that document and permit it to make its own impression.

How this general attitude of the German Church affected men of the sixteenth century, we may easily infer from a tale of Boccaccio's regarding the Italian Church of the fourteenth century. It is the second novel of the first day of the "Decameron," and it relates that a Jew who had been earnestly pressed by a Christian friend to accept the religion of Christ, insisted on making a journey to Rome to study that religion at its fountain head and in its purity. On his return, the Christian, who knew something about Rome, and feared that the last chance of the Jew's conversion had been lost, asked the latter what he thought of the Holy Father, the cardinals and the rest of the court. The Jew replied:

> To me it seems as if God were much kinder to them than they deserve; for if I may be allowed to judge, I must be bold to tell you that I have seen neither sanctity, devotion nor anything good in the clergy of Rome; but on the contrary, luxury, avarice, gluttony, and worse than these, if worse things can be, are so much in fashion with all sorts of people, that I should rather esteem the court of Rome to be a forge, if you will allow the expression, for diabolical operations than things divine; and for what I can perceive, your pastor, and consequently the rest, strive with their whole might and skill to overthrow the Christian religion, and to drive it off the face of the earth, even where they ought to be its chief succor and support. But as I do not see this come to pass, which they earnestly aim at—on the contrary, that your religion gains strength, and becomes every day more glorious—I plainly perceive the Spirit of God to be the protector of it, as the most true and holy of all others. For which reason, though I continued obstinate to your exhortations, nor would suffer myself to be converted by them, now I declare to you that I will no longer defer being made a Christian. Let us go then to your church, and do you take care that I be baptized according to the manner of your holy faith.

It is not too much to say that, at the opening of the sixteenth century, Germany was seething with discontent, and at the verge of an outbreak against the papacy. But it was the Papacy, rather than the Church itself, that was the object of anger and opposition. The Diets at Augsburg, in 1500, 1510 and 1518, were occupied largely in the making of bitter complaints against papal exactions and the corruption of papal agents. The greater portion of the complaints in the *Centum Gravamina* were of long standing, and had been urged in public and private for several generations, with a force to which each decade gave new increment. The feeling against Rome was at fever heat when the first protest against the abuse of indulgences was uttered by Luther. Germans of all classes were ripe for revolt, longing for a champion and mouthpiece. The princes were looking about for a plausible *casus belli*, and were rejoiced when the

trouble broke out; and while at first perhaps no one of them had any fixed design of defying the Church, and certainly not one had any serious desire for a real reform, they felt willing to tolerate or encourage any protest, as a means of forcing the Pope's hand and obtaining better terms for themselves. They were accustomed to dicker with the Pope in this way, and anticipated more than the usual profit. As the movement gathered force, the rulers saw a tempting opportunity to enrich themselves by despoiling the Church, to increase their own power at the expense of both Pope and Emperor, and this made a considerable number of them enthusiastic Protestants.

Nevertheless, the power of the Church appeared irresistible, in no danger of being seriously impaired. Could it be reasonably supposed that any human force could overturn a system so intrenched and fortified? The reply to such a question seemed to be made all the more certain by the well-known fact that there had been many revolts against the Papacy before this, and only the Husites of Bohemia had caused any real concern. They successfully defied the combined powers of Pope and Emperor for more than a generation, but they had been finally crushed, and all other attempts at rebellion had been suppressed with ease. There had been many demands within the Church for its reform in head and members, and several councils had assembled that had declared such reformation to be their purpose. But all attempts had come to nothing, and the Papacy emerged from this long contest with a stronger grip on the Church than ever—and also more corrupt than ever. It seemed to the Constance fathers that no greater monster of iniquity than John XXIII could ever be seated in the papal chair, but they had not known Alexander VI.

If these medieval attempts at reform are closely scanned, it becomes evident that they were half-hearted and foredoomed to failure. They aimed at only the practical or disciplinary betterment of existing evils, without striking at the root out of which the abuses grew, namely, the doctrinal system of the Roman Church. No radical reform, going to the very foundation of the evils bewailed, was really desired or by any believed to be possible. There was no idea within the Church of a complete break with existing doctrine and organization, no serious attempt at a return to the apostolic norm. It was the very Constance fathers who clamored loudest for "reformation" who burned the only real reformers of their time, John Hus and Jerome of Prag. Every man who had hitherto attempted a real reform—such men as Arnold of Brescia, Peter of Bruys, Waldo, Wiclif—had been driven into the attitude of schismatic or heretic, sometimes both. Peaceful reform within the Church had been demonstrated to be a mere dream. It was evident that reform must be achieved, if at all, by separation from the Church and a life-and-death struggle.

This conclusion is emphasized by the failure of the more spiritual movements within the Church to effect anything toward its regeneration. Monachism came nearest to a religious reformation of any organized effort in the Church. From time to time it did produce widespread revivals of religion, and led the way in great missionary enterprises; but monachism was founded on a pagan principle, and therefore could never recreate primitive Christianity. The mystics of the Middle Ages were the greatest unorganized reformatory force in the Church, and it did seem at times that their teachings might slowly leaven the whole lump. But the mystics had been noncombatants; they had been too content with mere toleration in the Church, and had not attempted any general reform, perhaps they were hopeless of accomplishing so grand a program. Though men like Tauler and Thomas à Kempis succeeded in stimulating the spiritual lives of thousands, and so religion pure and undefiled never became quite extinct in the Roman Church, the powers that controlled the doctrinal and institutional development of the Church were quite unaffected. A few individuals taught a pure Gospel, and here and there a single voice was raised against the abuse of indulgences, but the name of "Reformers before the Reformation" that has been given to these men describes their character, rather than measures their achievement. They reformed nothing. They hardly attempted reform. And their influence was so circumscribed that, though John of Wesel had once taught in Luther's own university of Erfurt, only a generation before his day, Luther had never heard of his predecessor or his teaching when he began his own protest against Rome. It was only after his work had progressed some years that writings of these mystics came into his hands, and he was then astonished to find how they had anticipated him.

In this survey of Germany at the opening of the sixteenth century, it has become evident that many things were conspiring to produce a revolt against the Roman Church. Such a revolt would be the more formidable from the fact that the Papacy was then chiefly dependent on Germany for its revenues, since the other European nations had succeeded measurably in freeing themselves from papal exploitation. The princes and merchants, for different reasons, were very restless under this spoliation of a people of whom they would fain have been the despoilers. This was the real cause of the revolt from the Papacy that we call the Reformation —an economic and political struggle at bottom, to which the religious aspect given by the initial quarrel about indulgences was merely incidental. The revolt would have occurred had Martin Luther never lived. For we have outgrown Carlyle's specious one-man theory of history, and no longer believe that the story of human progress is nothing more than

the biography of a few great men. The old notion that Luther made the Reformation is probably not held to-day by any person of average intelligence. At most he only led and directed a movement that was inevitable. Germany was a powder mine, ready to be exploded by a spark, and a spark was morally certain to come soon from some quarter.[1] As it fell out, Luther's theses were the spark, and nobody in all Europe, except perhaps the Pope, was more surprised than Luther himself by the violence of the resulting explosion. While, therefore, the conditions in Germany were such that some great struggle in the Church was impending, some momentous change certain to come, the character of the change and the means by which it should be brought about were not even conjectured. Every great movement is the joint product of a great opportunity and a great man, a powerful, molding personality concurring with a silent, resistless tendency. Of no movement in history is this more true than of the Reformation, and in none are the two factors more distinctly traceable.

But while we can see these things clearly, from the men of the sixteenth century they were hidden. Never had the Roman Church seemed to be more solid, less in danger of formidable attack from within or from without. There had just been a last struggle for "reform," and an ecumenical council, the fifth Lateran, had been summoned to give effect to this demand for the purification of the Church. As usual, the cry for reform had become fainter with every month of the council's sitting, and the body was dissolved with nothing accomplished. It was on May 16, 1517, that the council adjourned, leaving Leo X absolute monarch of the Church, with no party anywhere capable of making head against him. He had seemingly no future opposition to fear. And it was in November of that very year that the storm broke.

[1] "This falling down and perishing of abuses was already in full sweep in many parts before Luther's doctrine came; for all the world was so tired of the abuses of the clergy and so hostile to them, that it was to be feared that there would be a lamentable perdition in the German land if Luther's doctrine did not come into it, so that the people might be instructed in the faith of Christ and obedience to the authorities. For they would not endure the abuses any longer, and would have a change right off, if the clergy would not yield or stop, so that there should be no resistance. It would have been a disorderly, stormy, and perilous mutation or change (as Münzer began it) if a steadfast doctrine had not come in between, and without doubt all religion would have fallen to pieces, and Christians become pure Epicureans."—Luther to Elector John at Speyer, in 1529. De Wette, 3:439.

THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

PART I

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION TO THE EDICT OF WORMS

1517–1521

THE
REFORMATION IN GERMANY

CHAPTER I

THE MAKING OF MARTIN LUTHER

In the initial stage of the German Reformation, Luther was the chief actor, and up to the Diet of Worms, in 1521, we have little more to do than to trace the development of his intellectual and spiritual life. He was born at Eisleben, November 10, 1483, according to his mother's rather uncertain recollection. The next day was St. Martin's day, and in honor of that saint he was named Martin at his baptism in the Petruskirche, where the font used is still shown. His father was named John and his mother Margaret. An attempt has been made to give them a noble origin, but Luther said to Melanchthon in after years: "I am a peasant's son. My father, my grandfather, all my ancestors, were thorough peasants. My father was a poor miner."[1] Miner he may have been and poor, but John Luther was a man of strong character, and had an honest ambition for his own and his children's advancement. To this end he and his wife cheerfully worked together, toiling and saving as best they could, and as the years went on they prospered. They were decidedly, almost sternly, pious; the home discipline was very severe; and, what is rather unusual, the mother was more ready with the rod than the father.

When Martin was only six months old his parents moved to Mansfeld, and here at a very early age he was sent to school. He had no very pleasant recollections of this school, where he learned little and sometimes received as many as fifteen floggings in a single day. In 1497 he was sent to Magdeburg, where he spent only one year, and then to Eisenach. Here he remained four years in the Latin school of the parish of St. George. Schools like this were numerous in Germany—there were then no fewer than four in Eisenach—and they are convincing witness to the already

[1] Letter to Melanchthon, de Wette, 4:33. Luther always spoke of both his parents with respect and affection, but especially of his father. On the day that he heard of the latter's death he declared to Melanchthon that everything that he was or had he had received from his Creator through his beloved father.

developing intellectual life of that country. Here Luther laid the foundation of his subsequent learning. The teacher was a Carmelite friar named John Trebonius, of whom it is related that he always took off his cap on entering the school, in honor of boys out of whom, as he said, "God might make rulers, chancellors, doctors, magistrates." Out of one of these boys God did indeed make the greatest man of his generation. It was the custom at Eisenach, as it had been at Magdeburg, for the scholars to sing in the streets and receive alms from the citizens. As a boy Luther had a sweet alto voice, which later became a tenor, and on one of his rounds he attracted the attention of Frau Cotta, the wife of a well-to-do citizen, who invited him into her house and fed him, and afterwards treated him as an inmate of her family. The Cottahaus is still preserved at Eisenach, the first story being now a *Bierstube* ("To what base uses may we return, Horatio!"), while the upper rooms are a Luther museum. The little cell in which Luther slept makes one pity the schoolboys who had worse quarters. This life at Eisenach the reformer always spoke of with gratitude and pleasure, and he often called that city his "beloved town."

From Eisenach Luther went to Erfurt, a larger city, even then boasting some sixty thousand inhabitants, the seat of one of the finest cathedrals in Germany, and, what is more significant, of a celebrated university, established by a bull of Clement VII in 1379, the fifth institution of its rank to be founded in Germany.[1] It was John Luther's ambition to fit his son for the practice of law, one of the most lucrative callings of the age, and to see him the trusted adviser of the Counts of Mansfeld. As the miner increased in wealth, and rose in the esteem of his fellow townsmen until he became burgomaster of Mansfeld, his desires for the advancement of his son were quickened. He then saw, as many a poor man has seen since, that for a youth of strong natural abilities the shortest way to influence and power is through halls of learning. In the lecture room, in the sharp contact of mind with mind, the accidental distinctions of wealth and birth count for little, and the young men are esteemed or despised according to their scholastic attainments. The German peasant might not hope easily to pass the line that separated him from the feudal nobility, but the way was open to him into the ranks of the aristocracy of letters. Distinction in learning was therefore hardly less coveted than distinction in arms.

[1] The university of Erfurt was closed in 1816. Luther was matriculated as "Martinus Ludher ex Mansfelt," and when he took his baccalaureate degree the name is spelled Luder. In Wittenberg he was matriculated as Lüder. The spelling Luther does not appear to have been definitely adopted until 1517, though in the earliest of his letters extant, under date of April 23, 1507, he signs himself "Frater Martinus Luther." After he learned Greek he sometimes signed himself "Martinus Eleutherios," but this was merely a pun.

At Erfurt the students were divided into two groups, one calling themselves "poets," the other "philosophers." The former were the Humanists, and busied themselves with the study of the Latin classics—Greek was not yet a part of the regular university course, and just before Luther entered Erfurt the only teacher of Greek that the institution boasted had left. The "philosophers" preferred logic and the scholastic philosophy. Luther was not one of the "poets," that select and distinguished body who prided themselves on the Ciceronian purity of their Latin and made a serious business of writing elegant trifles. But he was not deficient in Latin; he was an appreciative reader of Vergil and Ovid and Cicero; we hardly know how much it signifies that he took with him into the monastery, as his only books, his Plautus and Vergil. He apparently made no deep impression on the university, and probably but for his later distinction few or none of his fellow students would have recalled that while among them he had been a musician and a learned "philosopher." In the numerous letters left to posterity by the aspiring Erfurt Humanists, his name is never mentioned. Melanchthon's statement that Luther's talents were the wonder of the university is hardly borne out by the official record that when he took his baccalaureate degree, at Michelmas, in 1502, he ranked only thirtieth in a list of fifty-seven candidates. That is respectable, to be sure, but one requires the vivid imagination of a eulogist to see anything of startling brilliancy in it. He did better on taking his Master's degree, at Epiphany, 1505, when he ranked second among seventeen candidates.

During these years, Martin had shown no special predilection for a life of piety. It does not appear that he was in any marked degree wild or irreligious; he was probably just about the average youth. It was only toward the close of his university studies that the religious side of his nature began to assert itself. In his wanderings through the library, he found one day a Latin Bible. He had never before seen an entire Bible, and it strongly excited his interest and curiosity. He was surprised to find how big a book it was, and eagerly turned its pages and read the story of Samuel. This story is told by all the biographers of Luther, on the authority of Mathesius, one of the earliest, who for some time lived in the reformer's family and obtained many such biographical details from his teacher's own lips. The most recent writers are inclined to discredit the story as inherently incredible. They point out the facts regarding the circulation of the Bible, both Latin and vernacular, and tell us that Luther must have taken great pains to keep himself in a state of ignorance, if he knew no more about the Bible than this anecdote implies.

It is not necessary to discredit the incident, however, even if it be

possible to do so; and that is difficult, in view of the fact that essentially the same thing is recorded in the Table Talk as spoken by Luther himself.[1] The real difficulty is not so much with the incident as with the inferences that have been drawn from it. Protestant writers have often seized on the occurrence as proof of the darkness of the times, of the indifference of the Roman Church to the instruction of the people in the Scriptures, and have by comparison exalted the work of the reformers in their translation and circulation of the Scriptures. What the incident actually proves is merely Luther's own personal ignorance. If he did not know that the passages which he had heard read in church did not constitute the whole Bible, there were nevertheless in Germany many who did know this. His case is not singular, though possibly exceptional. A French writer, Robert Etienne, speaking of the state of things in France in the early part of the sixteenth century, represents members of the Sorbonne, the great theological school of Paris, as not knowing the relative place of the New Testament, whether it came after or before the Old. He quotes a member of the school as saying, "I was more than fifty years old before I knew anything about the New Testament."

There is nothing to show that Luther's feelings of wonder and pleasure in becoming acquainted with the Bible made any lasting impression on him. His father's wish that he should become a lawyer had apparently been his own, but we may reasonably conjecture that as the time came when by entering on the preparation for his profession he should fix his occupation for life, he was first induced to consider seriously what he had all along accepted as matter of course. The most accurate information that we have about his decision to become a monk is given in a letter written to his father, in 1521, on the renunciation of his vows. He says: "It is almost sixteen years since I took the monastic vows, without your knowledge or consent. . . . I well remember telling you that I was called through a terrible apparition from heaven, so that, when face to face with death, I made the vow; and you exclaimed, 'God grant it was not an apparition of the Evil One that startled you.'"[2] This is more satisfactory than the stories that have gathered about this turning-point in his life, most of which have their legendary character stamped plainly upon them, especially the tale of the youthful companion stricken down at his side by a bolt of lightning, and his vowing in his terror, "Help, beloved St. Anna, I will become a monk!" What is certain is, that on July 17, 1505, Luther

[1] Da ich zwanzig jahre alt war, hatte ich noch keine Bibel gesehen; ich meinte, es wären keine Evangelien und Epistolen mehr, denn die in den Postellen sind.—Tischreden, No. 1743; Mathesius, first sermon, p. 3.

[2] Currie, p. 87. Letter dated November 21, 1521, and sent to John Luther with a copy of the reformer's treatise (*De Votis Monasticis*, Wittenberg, 1521).—De Wette, 2:100; 6:25.

presented himself at the door of the Augustinian convent in Erfurt and asked admission as a novice.[1]

Not only did John Luther question the genuineness of this call, but he had a right to feel aggrieved.[2] He had a strong sense of parental authority, and of the obligation of the fifth commandment. He saw the cherished plans of years shattered in a moment, the sacrifices and toils of both parents made valueless by the wilfulness of him for whom they had been cheerfully given. He felt that whoever else might despise and flout him, his son owed him affection, confidence and obedience. And in later years at least, perhaps even at this time, Luther felt that his father was right, that he himself had sinned. The fact that he went to the convent so secretly and suddenly argues an uneasy conscience; but the Church taught that in such case God must be obeyed rather than father and mother. Many and subtle are the causes that go to the molding of a human life; it is more than probable that this secret sense of having done an unworthy act, as well as the remembrance of his father's grief and indignation, made the monk's frock sit uneasily on Luther from the first. Nevertheless he supposed his decision to be irrevocable: "I never thought to come out of the convent; I was clean dead to the world, until God deemed that the time had come, and Tetzel with his indulgences drove me."

Once in the monastery, Luther entered heartily into its duties. We are always prone to exaggerate everything connected with the early life of a great man; especially if he has sprung from obscurity do we magnify his humble origin and the hardships of his youth, in contrast with the splendor of his manhood. Luther's biographers have not resisted the temptation to make him everywhere and always the hero; and we are often at no little loss to know what to regard as sober fact and what to credit to an amplifying imagination. It is not rash to believe that the Augustinians were pleased to receive the young Master of Arts into their brotherhood. This would have been natural, and agrees well with what we know of the anxiety of the different orders to obtain accessions to their ranks of promising scholars. But we cannot so readily accept the account that represents these monks as manifesting the coarsest jealousy and ill-will toward the young novice; and as taking delight in humiliating him by imposing on him the most disagreeable and menial tasks. In after years Luther made no mention of the unkindness of his brother monks. He was

[1] The Augustinians were a comparatively new order, having been established by a constitution of Benedict XII, May 15, 1339.—*Mag. Bull.* I: 237 *seq.*

[2] John Luther took a characteristic way of manifesting his displeasure with his son's conduct. He at first renounced him altogether, but friends intervened and he was half reconciled to Martin, but from that time resumed the familiar *du* in his speech and writing, instead of the more respectful *sie* which he had used since his son took his Master's degree.

probably treated just as other novices were treated—naturally, the rules of the monastery were not relaxed in his favor. If we are to trust Luther's own recollections of that time, he would have had his duties made more burdensome rather than lighter. He already shows in the monastery a trait that was characteristic of him through life: he lived in the passing day, performing the tasks, bearing the burdens, using the opportunities that each hour brought or suggested.

There was a time when Roman Catholic writers took the ground that Luther was unfaithful to his vows in the monastery—that he was never a sincere and faithful monk. This ground they have abandoned, and the later writers admit that his monastic life was most exemplary. Janssen, the most learned and candid of Roman historians, maintains with considerable plausibility that Luther never had a genuine "vocation" to the monastic life, but entered on it because of an impetuous resolve and continued in the same self-willed spirit. Hence he fell a victim to an exaggerated scrupulosity of conscience and subjected himself to austerities not warranted by the rules of his order. Indeed, Luther tells us this himself: "I imposed on myself additional penances; I devised a special plan of discipline for myself. The seniors in my Rule objected to this irregularity, and they were right. I was a criminal self-torturer and self-destroyer, for I imposed on myself fastings, prayers and vigils beyond my powers of endurance; I wore myself out with mortifications, which is nothing less than self-murder." The severity of his parents toward him in his youth had bred in him a great fear of God, but no love, and so he was forever trying to appease an angry Judge by his own righteousness. "I was a most outrageous believer in self-justification, a right presumptuous seeker of salvation through works, not trusting in God's righteousness, but in my own." And so he came actually to hate God, to loathe the very sight of Christ on the cross, and his despair brought him to the verge of suicide.[1]

From this long period of religious anxiety and spiritual unrest Luther came out at last with strong and definite convictions as to the way of salvation for himself and others. His experience was not essentially different from that which many earnest-minded men have passed through, both before and since his time. Many have had the same consciousness of sin, the same conceptions of the holiness of God, and like him have sought in vain to quiet the heart by fasting and prayer, by mortification of the

[1] Luther's references to his monastic life in his later writings are numerous and all in the same key. See LDS, 46: 64, 73; 48: 306,317; 49: 300, 314; Com. on Gal. 1: 107. Perhaps the most characteristic utterance is this: *Wahr ists, ein frommer Münch bin ich gewest, und so gestrenge meinen Orden gehalten, das ich sagen dar: ist je ein Münch gen Himmel kommen durch Müncherei, so wollt ich auch hinein kommen sein.* 31: 273.

flesh and humiliation of the spirit. It is not so much with his spiritual troubles, great as they were, as with the manner in which he was relieved of them, that the world is concerned. This was largely by the help of judicious friends. Even in the monastery at Erfurt he was not the only man who had painfully groped in the darkness and after long search had found light. In his novitiate he had been placed under the care of an old monk, who was to be his mentor and guide. It was this monk who first reminded him that sin is fully remitted to those who believe in Christ. He called Luther's attention to the Apostles' Creed, and especially to the clause, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." This, he said, was not merely a remission of sins generally, but of our own sins as well. It was the forgiveness of sins, as opposed to the painful expiation of them; forgiveness, not on account of our own works of satisfaction, but for the sake of Christ's atonement and intercession.

This teaching of the monk was fortified by that of John von Staupitz, the vicar-general of the Augustinians for Germany. This man is the first whose name is associated with Luther's religious history. He was a man of gentleness, simplicity and religious earnestness; learned himself and a lover of learning; but that which gave him his peculiar qualification to minister to distressed souls was the fact that he had learned by his own experience, "that Jesus Christ is the Saviour even of those who are great, real sinners, and deserving of utter condemnation." He gave his young friend a Bible. Luther had evidently found the right school; his friends were such as he needed; the phrase "The just shall live by faith" became fixed in his mind, afterwards to be better understood; he became a student of the Bible, of Augustine, and of some of the later and more evangelical schoolmen; and gradually he worked his way into the light.

Luther was ordained priest on May 2, 1507. His father was prevailed upon to be present at the ceremony, which was probably held at the high altar of the cathedral. A banquet followed in the evening, after the custom of the time, and Luther tried to draw from his father some expression of approval of his course. "Father," said the young monk, "what was the reason of your objecting to my desire to become a monk? Why were you so displeased then, and it may be not reconciled yet? It is such a peaceful and godly life to live." The sturdy old man replied, "Didst thou never hear that a son must be obedient to his parents?" And then, turning to the company he continued, "And you, learned men, did you never read in the Scriptures, 'Thou shalt honor thy father and mother'?" "In spite of this, the most powerful word I ever heard out of a human mouth," wrote the reformer in later years, "I persevered in my own righteousness, and despised you as being only a man. . . . Had I known, I would have

suffered a thousand deaths rather than acted as I did. For my vow was not worth such deception."[1]

Ordination to the priesthood was but the first step in a rapid promotion of Luther. The next year he was appointed to a professorship in the new university of Wittenberg, an institution founded in 1502 by Elector Frederick III of Saxony, surnamed by his friends the Wise, by his enemies the Fox. This new foundation was largely a matter of family pride. Ducal Saxony, at the division of territory between two sons (Albert and Ernest) of a former Saxon Duke, had Leipzig, and Electoral Saxony, too, must have its university. But though Frederick was on learning bent, he had a frugal mind; the new institution must cost the least sum possible. So he chose for its home Wittenberg, a little town of three thousand people, "on the confines of civilization," as Luther described it, mean in appearance and insignificant among German cities. It was not a very promising site for a university, in most respects, but an Augustinian cloister was situate there, part of which could be used for lecture rooms, while the brothers of the order could furnish most of the faculty, notably the faculty of theology, of which Staupitz was persuaded to become the head. It was an arrangement that did honor to the Elector's thrift. In this Augustinian convent Luther now found a home for the rest of his life, with occasional brief interruptions only. While it continued to be a convent, he continued to live in it as a monk; afterwards he and his family occupied it, by favor of the Elector, who finally gave it to him.

The young professor, not having as yet taken his degree in theology, began his work with the nominal title of professor of philosophy; he lectured on the Dialectics and Physics of Aristotle, as had been done in every university in Europe for four hundred years. But it is to be borne in mind that most of the universities had been founded mainly with the view of promoting theological learning, and that a knowledge of Aristotle formed the indispensable basis of all theological training. It was not, however, philosophy but theology that really interested Luther and that he actually taught, whatever the name of his chair. His work at Wittenberg suffered only one interruption before the beginning of his work as reformer: about a year after his appointment to the faculty, he was transferred for a short time to Erfurt, and then was sent to Rome on business in behalf of his order, pending in the papal court.[2] This must be

[1] Letter already cited; Currie, p. 87, etc.

[2] The exact time, as well as the length of this journey, is unknown to us. We only know that it occurred between September 10, 1510, when Luther was in Erfurt, and May 8, 1512, when he was again in Wittenberg. In a tract written in 1545, Luther speaks of being in Milan in 1510, but after so long an interval he might easily make a mistake of a year in his date. He was surprised to find the Ambrosian rite practised at Milan, so that he could not celebrate. LDS 32: 424. Cf. Theodor Elze, *Luther's Reise nach Rom*, Berlin, 1899; Hausrath, *Martin Luther's Romfahrt*, Berlin, 1894.

regarded as by all means the most significant and influential of all that befel Luther during this period of preparation. When we remember that the whole active life of this man was lived within a little bit of Germany, not larger in area than the state of Rhode Island, and that on only one other occasion in his entire life did he emerge from this seclusion into the great world and get a glimpse of men and things more than merely local and provincial, we shall be able to estimate this journey in its true, epoch-making meaning, as regards his mental and spiritual development.

The journey was made in the company of another monk, and on foot. From scattered references to his experiences in his Table Talk and later writings, we are able to reconstruct his itinerary, at least so far as to map out the general route and name the chief stopping places. He went by way of Austria, as the custom was being entertained at the monasteries, which were to be found every few miles in any direction all over Europe—at those of his own order by preference, at a Franciscan or Dominican convent in the absence of his own. He is most reminiscent of Italy, and we learn accordingly that he passed by way of Padua, Bologna, Florence and Siena to Rome; and after transacting his business in that city, he returned by way of Milan and Switzerland. Years afterwards he talked with his friends of the works of the Italian painters that he saw at Florence, and though he was no student of art, then or afterwards, he appears to have appreciated the significance of what he saw quite as well as the average traveler in Italy to-day. Some of the cathedrals roused in him emotions of wonder and awe, especially the great marble pile of Milan. There is no doubt that the value of this tour to Luther, as part of the culture of mind and taste, was beyond computation, more to him than a whole year at the best university of his time for the broadening of his mind, his sympathies, his knowledge even.

But it was the spiritual result of this experience that was of greatest value. To it we may directly trace his ultimate emancipation from the trammels of medieval superstition, and his progress into a clearer apprehension of the gospel teaching. At first he was full of what he supposed to be pure religious emotion. When he approached the city and obtained his first view of it, he fell on his knees and exclaimed, "Hail, holy Rome!" In the city he went from shrine to shrine, and visited all the holy places. "I too was at Rome like a dead saint, running through all the churches and crypts, believing all the lies that were told, with all their stench." He said masses in the churches at every opportunity, and lamented that his father and mother were not already dead, that he might avail himself of the indulgences everywhere offered to get them out of purgatory. A special indulgence was promised then as now to all who should ascend on their knees the Santa Scala, which tradition says was the marble staircase

in Pilate's palace, which our Lord ascended when brought before the Roman procurator. Luther duly attempted the task, but halfway up there flashed through his mind the words, "The just shall live by faith," and for the first time he fully apprehended their meaning. He rose to his feet and walked back down the stairs and out, for the first time in his life knowing what it was to be a free man, in the Pauline sense of the word.[1]

Still, we must not imagine that Luther was fully conscious of what was taking place in him. He was disturbed by what he saw and heard in Rome, but his faith in the Church and its system was not at that time seriously affected. He was receiving impressions that were to have great weight with him later, as he himself testifies: "I would not have missed seeing Rome for a hundred thousand gulden; for I might have felt some apprehension that I had done injustice to the Pope . . . but as we see, so we speak."[2] The unbelief, levity and immorality of the priests whom he met shocked him; and all that he saw and heard convinced him that the common saying was true, "If there was a hell, Rome was built on it." Julius II, the Pope of this day, was absent from the city and Luther probably did not see him, but he saw more than enough of cardinals and prelates who led scandalous lives. The highest dignitaries jested about the holiest things; he saw priests performing the mass in indecent haste, and perverting the very words of consecration; he saw the greed, the luxury, the venality, the ill-concealed infidelity of high and low in the Church. But yet he saw as one who does not see;[3] only later did the full significance of it come home to him.

Returning to Wittenberg, Luther took the degree of Doctor of Theology and entered upon the real work of his life. He shrank from the responsibility of lecturing on the Scriptures, and of preaching, for with all his later self-sufficiency, he appears in his youth to have suffered from extreme diffidence of his own powers and qualifications. In after years he showed his friends a pear tree in the garden where he debated the matter with Staupitz, who wished him to take the chair that the general had hitherto held in the university and become the head of the theological faculty. Luther objected that he was too young to be a Doctor; the reply was that God needed young and vigorous Doctors. But he was sickly and the

[1] This incident is first related by G. Mylius, in an exposition of Romans, published at Jena in 1595; but he says that he had it from an autograph MS. of the reformer's son, Dr. Paul Luther, who had heard his father relate the story in the year 1544. Köstlin, 1: 98, 749.

[2] Tischreden, No. 2964. This he repeated with much emphasis on several occasions. The entire account of his Italian experience is most interesting. Of the many references to them in later years, the following are the most significant: LDS, 31: 327; 40: 284.

[3] Not only did Luther's visit to Rome have little immediate effect on him, but he seems to have been especially insensible to the spirit of freedom and the love of beauty in its intellectual life. He could only feel the moral poverty of the city. See Hausrath, *Martin Luther's Romfahrt*, p. 33.

burden would kill him in a year. "Very well then, in God's name," answered Staupitz, "the Lord has large affairs in hand and he needs wise men up yonder." He was too poor, and could not pay the expenses of the new degree; the Elector had offered to pay for him.[1] Only the Holy Ghost could make a Doctor of Divinity; he need not trouble himself about that—it was his duty to obey his superior, and his superior commanded him to be a Doctor. After that there was nothing more to be said; it became to him a call from God. But this entrance on a new career brought him into perplexities and anxieties of all kinds. He afterwards said, "Had I known what I now know, not ten horses could have dragged me to it."

The new degree freed Luther from all restrictions, and gave him the right to teach theology openly. Besides adding weight to his words with others, it gave him the strength that comes to every man from the consciousness that he has the recognized right to teach. The Doctor's oath then required all candidates to defend the truth of the Gospel, and to refrain from teaching doctrines condemned by the Church and offensive to pious ears. This oath was not to him a mere formality; in his profoundly serious way, he put his heart into every word of it. It made an ineradicable impression on his mind; it was his warrant and justification when he saw the strife and confusion that his teaching produced—it was his oath that constrained him to speak; he could not innocently remain silent. Nearly twenty years after he received his degree he wrote, "But I, Martin Luther, am thereunto called and forced, that I must become a Doctor without my thanks, from pure obedience; then I had to take the Doctor's office, and I swear and vow by my best beloved Scriptures to preach and teach truly and purely. In such teaching the papacy fell in my way and would keep me from it."[2] Even the papacy could not be permitted to stand against his oath.

Nearly all teachers who have made their mark upon the world have begun young. Those who have called them to the office of teacher have not waited until they became deeply learned in the science they were expected to teach, wisely content with general qualifications, knowing that the acquisition of special knowledge by a man of earnestness and power is only a matter of time. The young Doctor Martin was not yet, it may be, a great theologian, but he was a great teacher. He began his lectures with the Psalms, and we still possess his manuscript notes of the lectures, of no great exegetical value now, to be sure, but witnessing to his

[1] As a monk, Luther had no money of his own, and his order may have had no funds that could be properly used for such a purpose. A receipt is extant in Luther's own handwriting, in which he acknowledges the Elector's generosity in his behalf. De Wette, 1: 11.

[2] LDS, 39: 256.

industry in the prosecution of his studies. He now began to study seriously the original languages[1] and texts of the Scriptures, no longer content with the Vulgate, though that of necessity continued for some time to be the basis of his actual work.

Soon Luther began to lecture on the epistles, especially Romans and Galatians.[2] These writings he so explained that a new light of doctrine seemed, after a long dark night, to rise. He showed the difference between the law and the gospel, between salvation by works and salvation by faith. He recalled the minds of men to Christ, and, like another Baptist, pointed out the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. It is thus that Melanchthon describes him,[3] looking back and recalling his work after his death; and this summary of his work as a theological lecturer is shown to be accurate by the writings that he produced during the years from 1512 to 1517. This was the busiest, and in some respects the happiest, part of Luther's life. He had no idea of winning distinction outside of his limited Wittenberg sphere. Not ambition, but a sense of daily duty, inspired him and kept him faithful to his numerous tasks. In a letter to his friend Lange, under date of October 26, 1516, he says: "I have almost continuously need of two secretaries; for I do nothing else all day long but write letters. I am preacher to the convent; I read prayers at table; I am pastor and parish minister, director of studies, the prior's vicar, inspector of the fish-ponds of Litzkau, counsel to the inns of Herzberg at Torgau, lecturer on St. Paul, and commentator on the Psalms." He says that he had rarely time to repeat the prescribed daily prayers, or to sing a hymn.[4]

Luther could not at once free himself from traditional methods of thinking and feeling. Indeed, in many respects he never did escape from the past. All his life, to some extent at least, he followed the example of the allegorical expositors, and often gave fanciful interpretations of Scripture. But from the first his leaning was toward that which was best and most spiritual in the Church. His natural disposition, as well as his personal experience, inclined him toward the mystics. Their notions of the reality of communion with God, their yearning for a complete submission to God's will, their subordination of form to spirit in worship and service—all exactly corresponded with his own sense of the fitness of

[1] Yet his attainments must have been very slight at this time, for so late as February 18, 1518, he confesses to his friend Lange that he cannot write the Greek characters. De Wette, 1: 34. He had, however, acquired a great knowledge of the content of Scripture and could turn to any text. Tischreden, No. 76.

[2] The lectures on Galatians were published by Luther in 1519, but those on Romans remained in MS. and were long lost sight of, but were discovered and published in 1908, and have contributed much to our knowledge of the reformer's early development.

[3] CR 6: 160.

[4] Currie, p. 10; De Wette, 2: 41.

things. He saw in John Tauler, the great mystic preacher of Strassburg, almost a model theologian. He published (and it was his first publication) the "German Theology,"[1] which he supposed to have been written by Tauler, saying of it: "I have not come across a book, next to the Scriptures and St. Austin, from which I have learned and shall learn more about God, Christ, man and all things." The book was a revelation to him. Working alone, and in comparative seclusion, he had felt that his views were singular; and it was with a kind of pleased surprise that he found they had been taught by predecessors. He sent the little book to his friend Spalatin, as a specimen of "pure, solid, ancient theology," and he several times quotes it in his sermons of that time.

But while in feeling and sentiment he was a mystic, in theology Luther was a follower of Augustine. In 1516, at Wittenberg, he presided at the discussion of certain theses in which Augustine's central doctrines were defended. These theses were, in substance, taken from his own lectures. They teach the helplessness of the human will, and man's absolute dependence on the grace of God: "Man, the grace of God excluded, can by no means keep God's commandment, neither can he prepare himself for grace, either from congruity or condignity; but necessarily remains in sin." "The will of man, without grace, is not free, but is enslaved though not willingly." The same doctrine he taught in a fragment of one of his lectures, now extant. He was an Augustinian, or, as we now say, a Calvinist. In order to understand the importance of this fact, we must bear in mind that certain theological opinions have a dominating influence. They do not stand alone, but determine the attitude of those who hold them to other associated opinions. Luther's Augustinian theology, therefore, long before his controversy with the papacy began, separated him from that phase of the doctrine of the Church with which Augustinianism was incompatible. And in his day the trend of Catholic doctrine and practice was, as it long had been, away from Augustine.

Some men are mystics by nature, and a man might be an Augustinian in one age as well as in another; and there is no reason why, in any age, both types of Christian doctrine might not be united in the same man. St. Bernard, in the twelfth century, furnishes an example of such combination; Pascal, in the seventeenth century, furnishes another. It was nothing, therefore, in his environment that made Luther either a mystic or an Augustinian. The same cannot be said of his antagonism to Aristotle and the scholastic theology. It was no mere natural antipathy that made him write letters, as he said, "full of blasphemies and curses against Aristotle and Porphyry and the sententiaries," or that made him speak

[1] A first edition, in December, 1516, was from an imperfect MS., and a more complete edition followed in 1518.

of Aristotle as "that actor, who, in his Greek mask, has deceived the Church"; or that made him say, "If Aristotle had not been flesh, I would not hesitate to say that he was the devil."[1] No one could write in that way of an ancient philosopher unless he had a personal grievance. Luther had a grievance, and he was not alone in being tired of Aristotle. There was a widespread feeling that the world had had too much of him. This feeling was symptomatic; it was such a feeling as men always have when they are beginning to shake themselves loose from old and long-reigning modes of thought. They will not only abandon them, but abandon them with contempt and indignation. How often has the world, conscious of its woes, hailed some new light as a morning star that was to usher in the longed-for day; watched it with eager eyes, and followed it with patient feet, until, at last, convinced that it is only some wanderer moving in a narrow earth orbit, men have turned away from it in the bitterness of despair. To the Middle Ages Aristotle was such a light.

The explanation of Aristotle's great influence on the medieval Church is not far to seek. It is accounted for by the fact that he was and is and always is to be the great expounder of the laws of thought. It has been more than two thousand years since he wrote, and no essential point in this teaching has been impeached and no really fruitful addition to his work has been made. Now it is one of the constantly recurring illusions of men that, if they only had the right method of reasoning and investigation, they might ascertain and demonstrate all truth. Aristotle was supposed to have furnished that method. By analysis and synthesis, by induction and deduction, by the magic power of the syllogism, all things were to be revealed. But gradually the medieval world came to accept and apply only one part of the Aristotelian method, deduction. Starting from universally accepted principles, the theologian exercised his ingenuity in deducing from those principles whatever might be logically inferred from them, and these inferences were held to be demonstrated truths.

Luther had been trained in this method and was thoroughly familiar with its results. From the beginning of his career as a teacher he began to break away from the influence of Aristotle, and came to repudiate the scholastic method and its results with all the energy of his intense nature, and to contend against both with the full vigor of a vocabulary peculiarly rich in terms of opprobrium. Not Aristotle, but Paul, he contended, should be the philosopher of Christians; but he meant: Paul as interpreted by Augustine. In his early monastic life he had put all his confidence in his own good deeds—his austerities, his prayers, his devout reception of the sacraments—now he came to believe that man has nothing at all to do in the work of salvation; all is of God's grace. Man has been so cor-

[1] Letter to John Lange, February 8, 1516. De Wette, 1: 15.

rupted by sin that he has no freedom of will, and all his actions are the emanations of a corrupt nature, and therefore in God's sight are neither more nor less than sin. We are justified in the sight of God only through faith in Christ, whose atoning work is thus appropriated by us, so that his righteousness becomes ours. Luther could see no possibility of the forgiveness of sins save in this way, but through faith the possibilities of forgiveness became boundless: "We put on the garment of his righteousness, which covers our guilt and our condition of perpetual sinfulness, and furthermore makes up in superfluity for all human shortcomings; hence, when we believe, we need be no longer tormented in our consciences."[1] Luther's doctrine of justification often came perilously near to antinomianism: "Be a sinner, and sin right boldly, but believe still more boldly and rejoice in Christ, who is the vanquisher of sin. . . . From the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world, sin will not separate men, even though they should commit fornication a thousand times a day and murders as frequently."[2] Though these words admit of an explanation that makes them true, they might easily be taken by a careless reader as an encouragement to persevere in a life of outrageous sin, secure in the faith that justifies! And if Luther did not in these early years go to his most indefensible extremes of statement, his teaching was already considered of doubtful orthodoxy and of still more doubtful propriety. In July, 1517, several months before the beginning of the controversy on indulgences, he preached at Dresden, by invitation of Duke George of Saxony, and insisted in his sermon that the mere acceptance of the merits of Christ insured salvation, and that nobody who possessed this faith need doubt his own salvation. The Duke said afterwards at table that "he would give a great deal not to have heard this sermon, which would only make the people presumptuous and mutinous."

In the nine years in which he continued his professorial work at Wittenberg, Luther was constantly gaining in the esteem of his colleagues and of the town, but he cannot be said to have made much of a reputation elsewhere, save possibly at Erfurt. At the same time he was advancing in his order, and was in a fair way to stand one day at its head. In 1515 he was made provincial vicar, and was required to superintend eleven convents. Next year he made a visitation of them, and set them in order with a mixture of kindness and firmness that won for him both respect

[1] "God can not see in us any sin, though we are full of sin, . . . but he sees only the dear and precious blood of his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, wherewith we are sprinkled. For this same blood is the golden garment of grace that we have put on, and clothed with which we appear before God, so that he will not and cannot look upon us differently than though we were his own dear Son himself, full of justice, holiness and innocence." Walch (Halle) 8: 878.

[2] *Esto peccator et pecca fortiter, sed fortius fide et gaude in Christo, qui victor est peccati, mortis et mundi; peccandum est, quàm diu sic sumus*, etc. De Wette, 2: 37.

and praise. In December, 1516, he issued his first original book, a little treatise on the seven penitential Psalms, of no great significance, save for the fact that it gives emphasis to his growing esteem for the Scriptures, and his increasing tendency to make their study and exposition the great work of his life.

We have followed Luther to the point where he stands just at the entrance of his larger public career; his next step will implicate him in a contest in which he will have all Europe as spectators. As we look upon him, he is an earnest-minded, religious man; his learning is varied, but not profound or accurate. Circumstances, however, have led him to give special attention to the questions that will be involved in the coming controversy. They have come to him as a matter of personal experience; he has painfully thought them through and understands them. Besides, he has felt the influence of the new age; he is in revolt against old methods and authorities, and has conceived a passionate love for another authority, the Bible. He is prepared to be the leader of a great movement, and thousands unknown to him and to each other are ready to be led. But nothing of this appears on the surface; least of all do men suspect, or does Luther himself suspect, that he is about to burst into world-wide notoriety. He is diligent in the duties immediately before him, but the sphere of his labors is narrow, and his acquaintances are few. His friends are, for the most part, the young men whom he met at school and the university, monks, teachers, parish priests and professors. Among them are, however, three men of mark.

The first, Staupitz, we already know as Luther's superior in the Augustinian order, his instructor and comforter in hours of darkness, the man who had discerned his abilities and brought him forward as a teacher at Wittenberg. Staupitz is one of the most interesting personalities of the period, less known to modern readers than he deserves to be. A man of noble lineage, he entered the Augustinian order an an early age, and became head of the German province in 1503. Before this he had won recognition as a man of light and leading, and by his independent study of the Scriptures had come to the adoption of those theological views that are now identified with the name of Luther, who had small gifts for speculation and derived from this source nearly his whole stock of theological ideas, standing in the same relation intellectually and spiritually to Staupitz that Hus occupies with regard to Wiclif, namely, in the place of pupil and follower.[1] His general recommended to Luther the study of the Scriptures, and later the works of Augustine, and was the main agent in developing

[1] Keller, *Johann von Staupitz und die Anfänge der Reformation*, Leipzig, 1888, Especially the chapter on *Die Entwickelung der lutherischen Theologie und Kirche*, 130–167.

those ideas of the bondage of the will, of the supreme grace of God in man's salvation, of justification through the merits of Christ appropriated by means of the believer's faith, quite apart from all works of the law, which formed the burden of Luther's teaching even before 1517, and continued to the end of his life to be what he understood by the Gospel. Indeed, so much more prominent was Staupitz than Luther in what may be called the evangelical circles of Germany, that many looked to him as most likely to lead in a movement for the purification of the Church.

A second friend was George Burckhardt, commonly called Spalatin, a fellow student of Luther's at Erfurt, where, however, they did not become intimate. Spalatin was ordained priest in 1507, the same year as Luther, and in 1512 received an appointment in the household of Frederick the Wise, ultimately becoming the Elector's chaplain and private secretary, enjoying his complete confidence and transacting for him much of his private business. His intimacy with Luther began soon after 1512, when the Elector sent his two nephews to the university at Wittenberg, and Spalatin with them as tutor and mentor. Together the three sat for a time in Luther's lecture-room, and Spalatin became the warm friend of the young professor. Through his relations thus with the reformers at Wittenberg on the one hand, and with the Elector on the other, Spalatin was able to exercise a great influence on the progress of the Reformation, but he seems loyally to have effaced himself, and to have done his best to serve both his friends and his prince, with very marked success.

The third friend was Elector Frederick himself, now in the fifty-fifth year of his age and the twenty-first of his reign, a man of common sense, probity and firmness, a prince of large wealth, and for all these reasons the most respected ruler in Germany. He was a Catholic by conviction, and in 1493 he had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, bringing back a collection of no fewer than five thousand "relics," which were duly deposited in the Castle Church at Wittenberg. His temperament was phlegmatic, and he was noted for caution and dislike of change. But he was before all things else a German, with strong national feelings, and he had a natural sense of justice and fair play. Moreover, he cherished his new university as the apple of his eye, though averse to spending overmuch money on it, and he took an honest pride in its growing fame, and in his young, brilliant, outspoken theologian.

Such was Luther up to the year 1517, and such was his environment and training. He stands out before us as a devout Catholic, a faithful monk, an earnest teacher and preacher, supposing himself to be in full harmony with Church and Pope, with no slightest notion in his mind that he was a heretic, or in any danger of becoming a heretic, yet already

cherishing ideas that must inevitably have involved him in ultimate conflict with the Church.[1] The hour for a Reformation was at hand and a leader was ready. Again the fulness of the times was come, and again God sent forth a man.

[1] Janssen (2: 80 *seq.*) very properly argues that before the indulgence question came up, Luther had often avowed doctrines of grace, justification and bondage of the will that were contrary to the doctrine of the Roman Church. He quotes profusely from sermons, theses, etc., prior to November, 1517, to show that Luther was already a heretic. There is as little question that such was the fact, as there is of Luther's entire unconsciousness of his real relation to the Church.

CHAPTER II

THE WOLF IN THE SHEEPFOLD

LUTHER had become by the year 1517 the representative of a phase of thought that had long existed in the Church. Since the days of Augustine, there had been two differing conceptions of the religious life, one making prominent the inward and spiritual, the other the formal and external. Indeed, the two conceptions antedate Augustine; they go back to the days of Christ, and further. They belong to no time; they are not Protestant or Catholic or Jewish; they are human. To-day these conceptions separate Protestant from Protestant no less than Protestant from Catholic. Sometimes one has been stronger, sometimes the other. When there has been nothing to bring them into collision they have moved on quietly side by side, giving no intimation that they were two; but when anything has occurred to quicken or intensify them, the difference between them has been clearly marked. The emphasis of these differing conceptions has always produced sharply defined parties. In the days of Luther circumstances tended greatly to emphasize them, and the consequence was the rise of strong, bitter, persistent antagonisms. It is the purpose of this chapter to show how these conceptions came into conflict, what new difficulties were reached during its progress, and some of the effects produced on the course of history. It is a large subject, and if one should fail to treat it adequately, one may hope at least to give some hint as to the manner in which it may be profitably studied.

The antagonism began in reference to a matter of chief importance: the way in which sins may be forgiven and the soul saved. This was a question that concerned the Church's central office on earth. For, however far it came short of its duty, the Church regarded itself as the representative of Christ, and the depositary of grace for the salvation of men. There were many things that the Church might do: it might help the poor, relieve physical suffering, foster learning, and art and science, and all that is included in the notion of civilization. But this was incidental, not its real business; its business was with the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Whatever did not contribute to its chief end was of minor concern; whatever made against that must give way. It was content to be judged by the manner in which it performed its one great office in the world. As to what that office was there was no dispute. Both parties believed that

no one could be saved (normally, at least) outside of the Church, or without its help. Both believed that by baptism one was cleansed from the stain of original sin and introduced into the kingdom and favor of God. In the case of adults, baptism washed away all sin. But what of sins committed after baptism? Their remission was sought in the sacrament of penance.[1]

It was in this sacrament of penance that the Church came nearest to the people and exercised its greatest influence over them. In its developed form, it consisted of three parts: contrition, confession, satisfaction.[2] The first implied, if it did not demand, a genuine sorrow for sin committed; the second was followed by the absolution of the priest, who, in forgiving the sin repented of and confessed, imposed the third. Satisfaction, according to Luther, who in this was expressing the common opinion, consisted of prayer, fasting and alms.[3] In this case, however, prayer was a term of wide import, including every pious movement of the mind: reading and preaching and meditation on the word of God, as well as devotion, aspiration, supplication, and those exercises of the heart that the word "prayer" usually suggests. Fasting was not merely abstinence from food; it included all afflictive works of the flesh: vigils, labors, hardness of living, pilgrimages, all works of humiliation and mortification. Alms stood for all works of love and compassion toward our neighbors. Following the hints that Luther gives, we might crowd into the word "satisfaction" all the meaning that it ever conveyed to the tenderest and most afflicted conscience. On the other hand, a man who thought lightly of his sins would think lightly of satisfaction. There was danger that while some might discipline themselves with absurd levity, others might go to the extreme of severity, and after the most fervent and long-continued prayer, the deepest humiliations, and boundless charity, would still carry an overburdened conscience. This danger was avoided by committing the whole matter of satisfaction to the judgment of the priest. He enjoined what the penitent was to do, and the advice of the priest was the command of the Church. If men came to feel that God required exactly what the priest enjoined, no more and no less, there would be nothing strange in such conclusion.

The sacrament of penance was a growth, the slow development of centuries, and there was no part of it about which there were not differ-

[1] A scholarly exposition of the Catholic doctrine of penance and indulgences, from the modern Lutheran point of view, is given by Dieckhoff, *Der Ablassstreit, dogmengeschichtlich dargestellt*, Gotha, 1886, pp. 10–25.

[2] The three parts of penance, according to the scholastic theologians, were *contritio cordis, confessio oris, satisfactio operis.*

[3] *Satisfactio dividetur in orationem, jejunium, et eleemosynum, ubi oratio omnem animi motum, et actionem in se complectitus ad animam proprie attinentem*, etc. Sermon *de Indulgentiis*, 1518. LOL. 2: 326.

ing opinions. All agreed that there must be contrition, but how much or how little would suffice no one could definitely say. Some thought that not even contrition, but attrition, the simple wish to be contrite, would be enough; the wish to be contrite was rewarded with the grace of contrition, if a man put no obstacle in the way of grace. Others required the profoundest depths of sorrow. As to confession, some supposed that it was enough to confess to God alone; others thought that confession to a layman would suffice, while others again thought that, as penance is a sacrament, the confession must be made to a priest.[1] Some thought that only mortal sins were to be confessed; others required the confession of all sins, open, secret, mortal and venial. At first the absolution of the priest was a simple prayer that God would forgive; at last it was a positive declaration of forgiveness. Some thought that the priest only forgave the guilt of sin, others that he also remitted the penalty. In the same way there was no agreement as to the office and use of satisfaction. Everywhere and always when men thought at all about these things, they did not all think alike; but the constant tendency was to give prominence to the priest, and what the priest did.[2]

Satisfaction was the particular part of penance that gave occasion for the controversy between Luther and his opponents. In no developed practice of the Church do we have a better example of how a simple and reasonable requirement may grow away from its original purpose. In the early Church, when a member was guilty of open sin, he might be formally excluded and treated as "a publican and a heathen." But as this was believed to mean also exclusion from salvation, he was more frequently suspended from communion, with the possibility and hope of restoration, sooner or later. This restoration was to be gained by passing through several stages of humiliation. The discipline was a test of sincerity. No one would consent lightly to pass through it, and those who endured such a test might well be considered as having truly

[1] "Every day, once or twice, or oftener if possible, we ought to confess our sins to God. The confession we make to the priests brings this small help to us, that having received wholesome advice from them, by obeying the most salutary requirements of penance or by our mutual progress, we wash away the stains of our sins. The confession made to God alone helps in this, that the more mindful we are of our sins, the more God forgets them, and the more we forget them, the more the Lord remembers them." Theodulph of Orleans (797) in Capitulary to his priests, c. 30. The confession to God secures the forgiveness of sins; that to the priest shows how the sins themselves are to be purged away. See Gieseler, 2: 106. Peter Lombard (d. 1160) taught that confession might be omitted, but, as it was a question, it would be safer to have the priest, if possible.

[2] "This we may safely say and think: that God alone remits and retains sins and yet that he has given the Church the power of binding and loosing. But he looses and binds in one sense, the Church in another. For he, by himself alone remits sins, for he cleanses the soul from its inward stain, and frees it from the debt of eternal death. Such power he has not given to the priest, to whom nevertheless he has given the power of binding and loosing, that is, of showing that men are bound and loosed." Peter Lombard, *Sent. lib.* iv. *div.* 8.

repented.[1] This was the first and most obvious meaning of what the Church required. But besides, by means of its discipline, it declared and emphasized its condemnation of the penitent's sin. In some cases the separation from communion was for many years; in some for life, or until life was about to close. A great sin was visited with a heavy penalty; the great penalty implied a great sin. Men shrank from what the Church condemned, and so was created a Christian public opinion. But over and above this, the humiliation, suffering and sorrow of the penitent were supposed to move God's pity, as they certainly exerted a softening and purifying influence on those who were properly exercised by them. In many ways, then, the satisfaction required by the early Church was reasonable and effective.

The Church never lost sight of the fact that what it imposed by way of discipline was in its own hand; it was something that the Church had enjoined and that the Church could remit. In the case of the dying, all penitential requirements were remitted, and the dying man was received into full communion—months, even years of penance, gave way to mortal sickness. Discipline was for the living, not for the dying; and the dying, in their supreme need, should have the strength and comfort that came from the sympathy of fellow-Christians and the sacraments of the Church.

In early times penitential works came first and restoration to communion afterwards. In the later Church the order was reversed. There was a reason for this: the whole community had become Christian, and excommunication now carried with it social, political and business disabilities. As its consequences were so serious, it was resorted to only in extreme cases. There was still the feeling that confession and humiliation were due to God for sin—penitential works were still required—but the old place for them was taken away. When the Church no longer thought it proper to separate offenders from communion, another place must be provided; and as the confessing penitent received immediate absolution, he must "do penance" afterwards. In the old times this penance—the prayers, fasts, vigils, lamentations—had reference to readmission to the Church; but now that the penitent had con-

[1] We have in Tertullian's *De Pudicitia* a striking description of public penance in his day: "Why do you yourself, when introducing the repentant adulterer into the Church for the purpose of melting the brotherhood by his prayers, lead him into the midst and prostrate him, all in haircloth and ashes, a compound of disgrace and horror, before the widows, before the elders, suing for the tears of all, licking the footprints of all, clasping the knees of all" (ch. xiii). Jerome tells us of the case of Fabiola, who put away her husband and then married again, supposing that she had a right to do so. On her fault being made clear to her, "she put on sackcloth to make public confession of her error . . . stood in the ranks of penitents and exposed before bishop, presbyters and people—all of whom wept when they saw her—her dishevelled hair, pale features, soiled hands and unwashed neck." *Ep.* 77: 4.

fessed and been absolved, what did these things mean? They were works of satisfaction. They had nothing to do with remission of sin; guilt and condemnation were removed by the priest's absolution. But even after the sin had been forgiven, the sinner was not yet free from some measure of suffering, the penalty of sin. The penalty must be paid in this life or in purgatory. Until it had been paid, the soul could not enter heaven. The works of satisfaction were the paying of the penalty.[1]

Thus it was that, in the gradual unfolding of time the just and reasonable works meet for repentance became satisfaction, the third part of the sacrament of penance. But how did the Church look upon the works of satisfaction imposed by the priest? The great majority felt that something was required by way of penalty for sin. What that something was, or what would be its equivalent, the priest imposed; in his judgment, so much fasting, so much in alms, would cancel the debt. He might err by excess or deficiency. In the former case, no great harm could come; it would only mean a little harder earthly life. In the latter case, the deficiency would have to be made up in purgatory. But there was yet another way of looking at works of satisfaction: the priest was thought to represent the Church, and as the Church represented Christ, what the priest imposed was what was required by divine justice. Many held this view, and others who did not fully accept it, yet thought it a great deal safer to do what the priest required.[2]

With the change in the significance of penitential works there came a change in the source of the penitent's anxieties and trouble. Formerly he had pleaded for readmission into the Church; that attained, he felt sure of salvation. He now bore the burden of sin to be expiated. Just in proportion to the tenderness of his conscience he felt the insufficiency of his works of satisfaction. These works were sometimes bitter and hard to be endured, but with all his efforts he seemed to make no advance. The prospect was of a whole life of hardness, and, it might be, of years and years of suffering hereafter. The light would at last dawn upon him; he would surely reach Heaven at last; but it made the heart sick to think of the long and dark and toilsome way to be traveled before the rest could come. Was there no relief from this state of anxiety; no way to be rid of the oppressive burden and the long labor? Yes, the

[1] Absolution frees from punishment as well as from guilt, the punishment that condemns and wholly destroys, from which although a man is freed, he is bound to temporal punishments, since such punishment is medicinal, purifying, etc. This punishment remains to be endured in purgatory, even by those who have been freed from the punishment of hell.—Thomas Aquinas, Summa, pt. iii, *quest.* 69, supplement.

[2] The penance of the priest was even enforced by law. A law of Pippin (758) says, *Si aliquis ista omnia contemsit, et episcopus emendare minime potuerit, regis judicio exilio condemnetur.* Gieseler, 2: 54.

Church found relief. As it had formerly enjoined penance, and removed it in case of threatened death, so now it might, for just cause, change it or entirely remit it. This was indulgence.

The doctrine of indulgence, like that of penance, was a growth; and, as in the case of penance, indulgences were an established institution of the Church before a theory of them was elaborated. We have to go back as far as the third century, and the persecutions of Christians under Decius and Diocletian, to find the beginnings of the practice. Many members of the churches lapsed under the stress of these persecutions, denied Christ and sacrificed or delivered up the sacred writings. The problem of dealing with these *lapsi* became the most difficult question that the early Church had to solve. A minority held that Christ, who knows the secrets of the heart, might forgive those who truly repented of this heinous sin, as he forgave Peter; but that the Church, being unable to distinguish the truly penitent from those only pretending penitence, should not restore such sinners to communion. It was the insistence of the majority upon the forgiveness and restoration of the lapsed that led to the Novatian schism at Rome, and was the occasion also of the Donatist schism at Carthage. For the majority took the more charitable view that the lapsed members ought to be "given peace," or restored to fellowship, when they had given sufficient evidence of penitence. They were meanwhile put on much the same footing as catechumens, and Cyprian writes to his presbyters that they are to cherish and cheer these penitents "that they may not fail of the faith and God's mercy. For those shall not be forsaken by the aid and assistance of the Lord who meekly, humbly and with true penitence have persevered in good works."[1] What these "good works" were to be Cyprian leaves us in no doubt, for he elsewhere says:

> You must pray more eagerly and entreat; you must spend the day in grief; wear out nights in watchings and weepings; occupy all your time in wailful lamentations. After the devil's meat, you must prefer fasting; be earnest in righteous works, whereby sins may be purged; frequently apply yourself to almsgiving, whereby souls are freed from death. Let all your estate be laid out for the healing of your wound. He can mercifully pardon the repenting, the laboring, the beseeching sinner. He can regard as effectual whatever, in behalf of such as these, either martyrs have besought or priests have done.[2]

We see here well established, by the year 250, the notion that the penitent's own prayers and good works will purchase the pardon of his sins from God, and hence from the Church, but that others may do some-

[1] *Ep.* xii: 2.
[2] *De Lapsis*, 35, 36.

thing in his behalf, especially the martyrs. It was right that the Church should bestow special honor on the martyrs, and but natural that it should attribute to them special sanctity. But this led, after a time, to such errors in practice and perversions of doctrine that the more sober-minded Fathers were compelled to protest against the exaggerated and unwholesome estimate of the martyrs commonly entertained.[1] The one practice that immediately concerns us, however, seems to have provoked little protest: the custom of those awaiting martyrdom to give to those who had lapsed certificates to procure their restoration to the communion of the Church. Cyprian gives one of these certificates in what was probably the usual form:

> All the confessors to Father [Papæ, Pope, the usual title of all bishops] Cyprian, greeting. Know that to all, concerning whom the account of what they have done since the commission of their sin has been, in your estimation satisfactory, we have granted peace [*i. e.*, recognized them as worthy of Christian fellowship]; and we have desired that this rescript should be made known by you to the other bishops also. We bid you have peace with the holy martyrs [*i. e.*, receive these lapsed persons into the Church, as we have received them into our personal fellowship]. Lucianus wrote this, there being present of the clergy, both an exorcist and reader.[2]

Cyprian did not favor the acceptance of these certificates at their full face value, as a satisfactory equivalent for the public penance of the lapsed—not even a martyr could grant absolution from sin, but God only—and he rebukes the presbyters who had been too hasty in granting peace to the lapsed.[3] Still, he admits that the certificates have a certain value, since "the merits of the martyrs are of great avail with the Judge"; and, in case any of the certificated fall ill and are about to die, they "should be remitted to the Lord with the peace promised to them by the martyrs."[4] Here we see what was later called absolution in the article of death.

The germ of the practice of granting indulgences we have therefore found in the acceptance of these certificates of the martyrs as a partial equivalent for the public penance of the lapsed. And what Cyprian and other Fathers taught became the fixed practice of the Church, through the canons enacted by the early councils. Five of the twenty canons of the Council of Nice (x-xiv) are devoted to this subject, and a maximum penance of ten years is prescribed for the lapsed with two years more

[1] Augustine, *Serm.* xiv. "Constitutions of the Holy Apostles," v. 3, 9. Tertullian *ad Martyras*, i. 4. But *de Modestia*, 22. Tertullian denies power of martyrs to grant absolution.
[2] *Ep.* xvi.
[3] *Ep.* ix. *De Lapsis*, 20.
[4] *Ep.* xii, xiii. *De Lapsis*, 17, 18.

of only partial communion, *i. e.*, in the prayers at the eucharistic service, but not in the oblation. The local councils of Ancyra (A. D. 314) and Laodicea (365) confirm this treatment, and so does the general Council of Chalcedon (415). But these councils are also noteworthy in that they mark the extension of the public penance from the lapsed to those guilty of other flagrant sins, like adultery—these are also to be ranked with catechumens and required to undergo a penance, in some cases as long as twenty-five years.[1] They are noteworthy also in that for the first time the bishop is authorized to grant indulgence, in his discretion, *i. e.*, to shorten the penance and admit the culprit to communion sooner than the canons allow.[2] And in any case, those about to die were not to be deprived of the viaticum.[3]

The inseparable connection of indulgences and penance is, therefore, as clear historically as it is dogmatically. And such a germ was certain to find in the Catholic Church a fertile soil. As the practice and the doctrine of penance developed, indulgences would certainly grow *pari passu*. From the time of Leo the Great[4] public penance was rapidly transformed into private confession and such penance as the confessor might impose. To the prayers and almsgiving prescribed by the Church in Cyprian's day, pilgrimages to shrines held to be specially sacred were added as appropriate good works for the penitent. As the discipline of the Church became more strict and the penances imposed more onerous, it was natural that means of relief should be sought, but for a time the Church provided none—it was too much occupied in strengthening its grip on the medieval world to adopt an expedient that, whatever else it accomplished, would loosen that grip.

It is not until the time of the Crusades, therefore, that we find any marked development of indulgences. Urban II, at the Synod of Clermont in 1095, followed up the great sermon in which he roused Europe to one of the most momentous enterprises in its history by holding out the following inducement to all who would engage in this holy war:

> If anyone through devotion alone, and not for the sake of honor or gain, goes to Jerusalem to free the church of God, the journey itself shall take the place of all penance.[5]

It does not appear that the earlier indulgences contemplated more than the remission of canonical penances; nothing is said of remission of sins, or of the penalties of purgatory, though belief in purgatory was well

[1] Ancyra, can. xvi. Laodicea, can. ii.
[2] Ancyra, can. ii, v. Chalcedon, can. xvi.
[3] Nice, can. xiii.
[4] *Ep.* 136.
[5] *Quicunque pro sola devotione, non pro honoris vel pecuniae adeptione ad liberandam ecclesiam Dei Jerusalem profectus fuerit, iter illud pro omni poenitentia reputetur.* Canon ii. Mansi, 20: 816.

established in the Church from the time of Gregory the Great onward (d. 604). It is possible that nothing more than remission of canonical penance was intended or implied by the bull *Quantum praedecessores*, of Engene III, in 1145, which marks the beginning of the second crusade:

> Moreover, we, with paternal care providing for your peace and the need of the Church, by the authority committed to us by God, do grant and confirm to those who, in a spirit of devotion, have undertaken to begin and complete a work and labor so holy, so extremely necessary, that remission of sins which our aforesaid predecessor Pope Urban, instituted.
>
> According to the institution of our aforesaid predecessor, and by the authority given us by the Omnipotent God and blessed Peter, prince of Apostles, we grant remission and absolution of sins, such that he who begins and finishes a journey so holy, or dies on the way, shall obtain absolution from all sins that he confesses with contrite heart, and shall obtain the reward of the eternal recompense from the Rewarder of all.[1]

It must be confessed that this language is more than a little ambiguous, and lends itself without much forcing to a very broad interpretation, but probably nothing more was intended at the time to be included within the scope of this indulgence than canonical penances. This interpretation is borne out by the subsequent practice, which for a long time did not contemplate an increase in the supposed efficacy of indulgences, so much as an enlargement of their scope. The taking of the cross, for the recovery of the Holy Sepulcher, was supposed in the twelfth century to be a work of so great merit as well to deserve the special recognition of it by the Church. Nor did it appear to be an unreasonable notion that the power that imposed canonical penalties could also remit them. If the practice and the pretensions of the Church had stopped here, relatively little would ever have been heard about indulgences. But from the twelfth century the process of development went on with ever accelerating rapidity. The next step was to regard as crusaders those who took arms in behalf of the Church against heretics, which was done by Innocent III, and the Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215:

[1] *Nos autem vestrorum quieti, et ejusdem Ecclesiae destitutioni paterna solicitudine providenta, illis, qui tam sanctum, tamque pernecessarium opus, et laborem devotionis intuitu suscipere, et perficere decreverint, illam peccatorum remissionem, quam praefatus praedecessor noster Papa Urbanus instituit, auctoritate nobis a Deo concessa, concedimus et confirmamus. Peccatorum remissionem, et absolutionem juxta praefati praedecessoris nostri institutionem, Omnipotentis Dei, et Beati Petri Apostolorum Principis, auctoritate nobis a Deo concessa talem concedimus, ut qui tam sanctum iter devote incoeperit et perfecerit, sive ibidem mortuus fuerit, de omnibus peccatis suis de quibus corde contrito et humiliato, confessionem susceperit, absolutionem obtineat et sempiternae retributionis fructum ab omnium remuneratore percipiat. Mag. Bull.*, 1: 37, §§ 6, 12.

> Catholics who have taken the sign of the cross and armed themselves for the extermination of heretics, shall enjoy those indulgences and shall be rewarded with that holy privilege which is granted to those who bring aid to the holy land.[1]

But this Pope and Council, while they thus enlarged the scope of indulgences, undertook to reform abuses that had already developed. The theory underlying the early canons seems to have been that every bishop had the power to grant indulgences valid in his own diocese, and from the tenth century it became customary to grant at the dedication of a church indulgences to all who should perform certain devotions there. These came to be unduly multiplied, and it was felt that a restriction of this power was needed to prevent scandal. Accordingly this canon was enacted:

> In addition to these things, since through indiscreet and superfluous indulgences, which indeed prelates of the churches do not shrink from giving, both the keys of the church are despised and the efficacy of penance is weakened, we decree that, when a church is dedicated, indulgence shall not be granted for more than a year, whether it is dedicated by a single bishop or by many; and thereafter, on the anniversary of the dedication, the conceded remission of penances enjoined shall not exceed forty days. We enjoin that those who at different times grant certificates of indulgence, for whatever causes, restrict even this number of days, since the Roman Pontiff, who possesses the fulness of power, has been accustomed to keep control of such matters.[2]

From this time onward, the granting of indulgences was regarded as the special prerogative of the Pope, though episcopal indulgences still continued. At the first general council of Lyons, in 1245, a still further extension of indulgences to crusaders was declared, so as to include not only those who actually took the cross, but those who aided the crusade:[3]

[1] *Catholici vero, qui crucis assumpto charactere ad haereticorum exterminium se accinxerint, illa gaudent indulgentia, illoque sancto privilegio sint muniti, quod accedentibus, in terrae sanctae subsidium conceditur.* Canon iii. Mansi, 22: 987. The synod of Siena, 1425, granted the same plenary indulgence to all who would take arms against the Husites. Mansi, 28: 1062.

[2] § 62. *Ad haec, quia per indiscretas et superfluas indulgentias, quas quidem Ecclesiarum Praelati facere non verentur, et claves Ecclesiae contemnunter, et poenitentialis satisfactio enervatur: decernimus, ut, cum dedicatur basilica non extendatur indulgentia ultra annum, sive ab uno solo, sive a pluribus Episcopis dedicetur: ac deinde in anniversario dedicationis tempore* XL *dies de injunctis poenitentiis indulta remissio non excedat. . . Hunc quoque dierum numerum indulgentiarum literas praecipimus moderari, qui quo quibuslibet causis aliquoties conceduntur: cum Romanus Pontifex, qui plenitudinem obtinet potestatis, hoc in talibus moderamen consueverit observare.* Mansi, 22: 1050.

[3] *Eis autem, qui non in propriis personis illuc accesserint, sed in suis dumtaxat expensis juxta facultatem et qualitatem suam viros idoneos destinaverint, et illis similiter, qui licet in alienis expensis, in propriis tamen personis accesserint, plenam suorum concedimus veniam peccatorum. Hujusmodi quoque remissionis concedimus esse participes, juxta quantitatem subsidii, et devotionis affectum, omnes qui ad subventionem ipsius terrae de bonis, suis congrue ministrabunt, aut circa praedicto consilium et auxilium impenderint apportunum.* Canon 17. Mansi, 23: 628–632.

To those moreover who shall not have gone thither in their own persons, but at their own expense at least according to their means and rank shall have appointed suitable men, and likewise to those who have gone in their own persons even though at the expense of others, we grant full pardon of their sins. We also grant to be partakers of this same remission, according to the amount of their aid, and the state of their devotion, all who shall suitably contribute to the aid of that land from their goods, or shall give timely counsel and aid concerning the things aforesaid.

But by far the greatest enlargement of indulgences, and that which opened wide the door to the scandalous abuses of later years, was the Jubilee bull of Boniface VIII, *Antiquorum habet.* The opening words of this constitution approve the story that obtained general credence in the Church—the Pope only confirmed and made precise what was a general tradition and rumor in Rome, that special benefits and indulgences were to be had by visiting the shrines of Peter and Paul. The influx of pilgrims had begun before the bull was issued, and Boniface did little more than take instant and shrewd advantage of a superstition that he was powerless to combat. He could and did ride on the crest of a wave that would have submerged him had he withstood it. This bull, though one of the most momentous documents in the history of the Papacy, is also one of the briefest:

A credible report of old times says, that to those who visit the honorable church of the Prince of Apostles, in this city, great remissions of sins and indulgences are granted.

We therefore, who, as becomes our office, strive after salvation, and more gladly than others look after remissions and indulgences of this kind, all and several, pronouncing them approved and acceptable, do confirm the same by Apostolic authority, and approve, and even renew, and strengthen by the protection of the present writing.

Since moreover the most blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, will be the more fully honored, in that their churches in this city shall be thronged by the faithful, and the faithful themselves by the lavishing of spiritual services shall with better reason perceive themselves filled full in consequence of this very thronging, We, trusting in the mercy of the Omnipotent God, and in the merits and authority of his aforesaid Apostles, with the advice of our brethren and in the plenitude of the Apostolic power, will grant and do grant not only full and quite abundant, but the fullest pardon of all their sins,[1] to all who

[1] The essential part of this document, a sentence from sec. 2, is as follows in the original: *Nos de Omnipotentis* DEI *misericordia et eorundem Apostolorum ejus meritis et auctoritate confisi, de fratrum nostrorum consilio, et Apostolicae plenitudine potestatis, omnibus in praesenti anno millesimo trecentesimo, a festo Nativitatis Domini nostri JESU-CHRISTI praeterito proxime inchoato, et in quolibet anno centesimo secuturo, ad Basilicas ipsas accedentibus reverenter, vere poenitentibus et confessis, vel qui vere poenitebunt, et confitebuntur, in hujusmodi praesenti, et quolibet centesimo secuturo anno, non solum plenam et largiorem, imo plenissimam omnium suorum concedemus et consedimus veniam peccatorum.* For the whole bull see Mag. Bull, 1: 179.

in the present year, 1300, beginning from the feast of the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ just past, and in every hundredth year to come, shall reverently visit those churches, they being truly penitent and confessed, or who shall repent and confess in this present year, and in any hundredth year to come.

Commending that whoso wish to be partakers of this indulgence granted by us, if Romans, they shall visit those churches at least thirty days, consecutive or separated, and at least once a day; but if they are foreigners or live without the city, they shall do the same fifteen days. Everyone, however, will merit more and obtain a more efficacious indulgence if he visits those churches more often and more devoutly.

Let no man by any means impair this page of our constitution and appointment, or by a rash deed oppose it. But if anyone should presume to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the wrath of the Omnipotent God, and of his blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, Feb. 20, 1300, in the sixth year of our pontificate.[1]

All the documents that we have thus far examined have been concerned with the practice of indulgences, not with the doctrine. The Church had no doctrine, in fact, and to this day has none. That is to say, while Catholic theologians have elaborated a doctrine regarding indulgences, nothing is taught about them as an article of faith, except the mere fact that the Church has the right and power to grant them, and all who deny this are anathematized as heretics by the decrees of Trent. But it is open to any Catholic who admits so much, to go on and make any further explanation of the doctrine that he pleases. A good many theologians have availed themselves of this privilege, and there is now a well-defined teaching on the subject, though it still lacks official confirmation, save at a few points.

But as we have seen that there were great differences of opinion as to the nature and purposes of works of satisfaction, so there were differences as to the force and significance of indulgences. The general belief

[1] Like everything else connected with indulgences, the Jubilee was abused. It was evidently the idea of Boniface VIII, as it was the tradition of his day, to limit the Jubilee to the even years of the century, 1300, 1400, etc. But so great was the stream of pilgrims that poured into Rome during the year 1300, and so great was the wealth brought to Church and people by their presence, that there was no patience to wait a hundred years for the repetition of this experience. Various pious pretexts were found to make a decent veil for this greed. For example, pity was demanded for the generations that must live and die before this privilege could again be granted, unless the time were shortened. The demand of the people and the impatience of the Popes became at length too great to be resisted, and in 1350 Clement was moved to recognize a semi-centennial jubilee. Raynaldus, *anno* 1350, *n.* 2. This again proved too short an interval, and Paul II in 1470 fixed the time at every twenty-fifth year, in the bull *Inffabilis providentia*, *Mag. Bull*, 1: 385 *seq.* There, for very shame, it has since been left. Indeed, the interval could hardly be made shorter if any significance were to be preserved for such a celebration and pilgrimage. Exceptional blessings must have preserved for them at least an air of being exceptional, and not the regular thing.

was that the Church could relax what the Church had enjoined, but the application of this principle was by no means clear. If works of satisfaction were only disciplinary, and expressive of what, in the judgment of the priest, would be beneficial and helpful to the penitent, they would belong only to this life, and their remission could give relief in this world only. If the judgment of the priest corresponded with the judgment of God, and the works enjoined by the Church were also required by divine justice, their remission or relaxation was something quite considerable. This last came to be the popular opinion, but there were serious difficulties in the way of accepting it. The chief of these was the old belief, handed down from the first, that God alone can forgive sin and relax penalty due to sin. If these works of satisfaction were required by divine justice, and the priest in imposing them was simply declaring and enjoining what was already required by divine law, how could the Church remit them? In attempting to answer this question, the several theories of indulgence were formulated or invented.

The earliest of these was the theory of intercession. In consideration of certain services or gifts, the Church would intercede with God, and He, in answer to the Church's prayers, would remit or relax or pardon. It was the plan of intercession that Gregory VI (1044) was to use when he promised certain persons who had done a service for Rome, "both for himself and his successors to celebrate mass for them three times a year in all the Roman churches, and to have them in remembrance seven times during the sacred solemnities of the mass, that the Almighty Lord, by the merits of the mother of God, and by the authority of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and by the prayers of all the saints, living and dead, would absolve them from all their sins and lead them into eternal life."[1] Sometimes, indeed, the Popes forgot that they and the Church were simple intercessors, and promised absolutely and unconditionally. Sometimes, too, works of special merit were said to avail in themselves for the remission of sin and penalty. But the sober feeling of the Church required that the works should be supplemented by the prayers of the Church, which were supposed, in a certain sense at least, to command the favor of God. In this case, the power of the Pope, as head of the Church, was very great, since he might command the intercession of all the saints.

Another theory, more noted, or at least exciting more opposition, was that based on the Treasure of merits. This Treasure is composed of the merits of Christ, and of the saints in excess of what was required of them. Its principal support is the doctrine of the atonement held and taught by many learned Doctors of the Church, but most prominently by

[1] D'Achéry, *Spicilegium*, 3: 398.

Anselm (1109), that the death of Christ, an infinite being, was of infinite worth, not only sufficient but infinitely more than sufficient, to atone for the sins of the world. This doctrine was elaborated and applied to indulgences by Alexander of Hales (d. 1245). Christ, by the infinite worth of his person, accomplished through his sufferings a store of merit more than sufficient for the salvation of the whole world. These superabounding merits constitute a vast Treasure, which exists objectively, and being performed for the whole Church belongs to the whole Church and may be used for relieving from penalty those who need relief. And just as there was an arithmetical, quantitative valuation of the works of Christ, so there was the same of the works of the saints: they, too, could and did accomplish more than enough for their own salvation. What became of this excess? The merits of the saints naturally belong to the Church; the Church, in a sense, had acquired them. The merits of the Christ also belong to the Church, not naturally and of her own right, but as by a certain *unio mystica* the Church is one with Christ, whatever is his becomes hers as well. And so, his merits and the merits of the saints belong to the Church; and this great Treasure the Church administers and controls for the benefit of its members. This it does through its authorized officers, the bishops, and especially the Pope, the chief bishop.

Albertus Magnus (d. 1280) further elaborated this idea, by conjoining with the doctrine of Alexander the mysterious "power of the keys," given by Christ to Peter as head of the Church, and to his successors. This made clearer the way in which the Treasure could be lawfully dispensed. Such dispensation was vested in the Pope, as the successor of Peter and the holder of the keys. The merits and sufferings of Christ and the saints can thus be assigned for the benefit of those who need them, whether living or suffering in purgatory. The Church might pray, but it was with God to answer the prayer or not as he saw fit. But with the Treasure of merit at command, the Church operated on a solid basis. Provided there is such a Treasure, and provided the Church can control it, and provided the merits of Christ and the saints are actually transferred by the power of the keys to the receiver of indulgences, it would be safe to have indulgences. But there is such a Treasure and the Church does control it. Thus, notwithstanding the fact that God alone can forgive sins and remit penalty, the Church can guarantee such remission, because it can offer a consideration that God is bound to respect.

Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), in this as in most questions of theology, contributes little or nothing to the doctrine, but sums up all that was held by his predecessors and gives it logical coherency and system. He finds the ultimate ground of indulgences in Christ; no one has supreme power in the sacrament but Christ. But Christ could remit sin apart

from any satisfaction, as he did in the case of the sinful woman (John viii). Therefore Paul also could, and the Pope is of no less power in the Church than Paul. We should believe in the validity of indulgences, because the Church universal cannot err, and the Church approves indulgences; therefore they must be valid—it is heretical, impious even, to say otherwise. As to the limits within which indulgences become efficacious, Thomas says:

> But some say that they do not avail to absolve from liability to the penalty that is due in purgatory according to the judgment of God, but they avail for absolving from the obligation by which the priest binds the penitent to some penalty, or by which he is bound by canon law. But this opinion does not seem to be true. First because it is expressly contrary to the privilege given to Peter (Matt. xvi) that what he should remit on earth would be remitted in heaven. Hence, whatever validity the remission has at the bar of the Church it has the same at the bar of God. And besides, the Church, in granting indulgences of that sort would condemn rather than acquit, because she would send him to the heavier penalties of purgatory while absolving him from penalties enjoined.[1]

The secret of the validity of indulgences, Thomas finds precisely where Alexander found it, and he differs from that Doctor only in stating the thought with his usual unrivaled precision and felicity:

> The reason why they are able to avail is the unity of the mystic body, in which many have superabounded in works of penitence beyond the measure of their own dues and have patiently borne many unjust tribulations, through which a multitude of penalties might have been expiated, if owed by them. The abundance of their merits is so great as to exceed all the penalty owed by those now living. And especially, on account of the merit of Christ, which, though it operates in the sacraments, nevertheless its efficacy is not shut up in the sacraments, but by its infinity exceeds the efficacy of the sacraments. The saints, moreover, in whom this superabundance of the works of satisfaction is found, did not perform such works for a given individual who needed remission, but for the whole Church in common. And so the aforesaid merits are the common possession of the whole Church. Those things that are the common possession of any multitude are distributed to individuals of the multitude, according to the judgment of him who is over them. Wherefore, just as anyone would obtain remission of penalty if some one satisfied it in his behalf, it is the same thing if the satisfaction of another is distributed to him by one who has the power.

As for the power to grant indulgences, Thomas holds that this is a work of such importance as to be beyond the province of a parish priest, and that only a bishop can do it. But as the "Pope has the plenitude of pontifical power, the power of granting indulgences to the full

[1] *Summa Theologiae, Supplementum tertiae partis. Quaest* xxv, *Art.* 1.

extent rests in him, and in the bishops according to his regulation." Only one other question of importance remains to be answered: Does the efficacy of the indulgence rest on the faith of the recipient? Thomas answers this as we might expect from a doctor who felt constrained to maintain that the efficacy of the sacraments of the Church is *opus operatum*, a thing resulting from the mere doing of the act commanded. He was led to this conclusion by the conviction that only so could the objective validity of the sacraments be successfully maintained. Make the sacrament depend on faith, he argued, or the being in a state of grace, or any other subjective condition, and who can be certain that he has received any sacramental grace? Endless scruples of conscience are possible to disturb the believer. How can I be sure that I have real faith? How can I know that I am in a state of grace? But if the performance of the external act insures the reception of the divine grace, then we have something definite to trust. So as to indulgences: the one thing of which we need to be assured is that they are dispensed by one who had adequate authority, and for a sufficient reason. As to the latter, Thomas said, the Treasure of merits was collected for the glory of God and the good of the Church; therefore anything that promotes either constitutes a sufficient reason—a contribution of money to build the church of St. Peter, for example.

The bull of Clement VI, known as *Unigenitus Dei filius*, marks a considerable advance in the doctrine of indulgences. In it he adopts as his own, and approves as teacher of the whole Church on a question of faith, those ideas regarding indulgences that the doctors had elaborated. It can hardly be doubted that this document comes within the terms of the Vatican definition of papal infallibility, and hence its teaching is now a matter of faith, that every good Catholic is bound to believe. The bull says:

> For not with corruptible gold and silver did he redeem us, but with his own precious blood, as of a lamb without spot or blemish, who though innocent was sacrificed on the altar of the cross in our behalf, not shedding a mere drop of blood, which nevertheless on account of his union with the Word would have sufficed for the redemption of the whole human race, but profusely, as a flood is seen to pour forth, so that from the sole of his foot to his head no soundness was found in him. How much more then, in order that the pity of so great an effusion may be rendered neither needless, vain nor superfluous, he accumulated a treasure for the militant Church, wishing like a tender father to give a treasure to his sons, that so there might be an infinite treasure for men, and those who have employed it have been made partakers of the friendship of God! Which treasure indeed has not been laid up in a napkin, nor been buried in a field, but he has granted it to be dispensed to believers

> in a wholesome manner and for pious and reasonable causes through the blessed Peter, keeper of the keys of heaven, and his successors, his vicars on earth; and to be mercifully applied to those truly penitent and confessed, sometimes for complete, sometimes for partial remission of the temporal punishment due for sins, both general and special, as far as they have learned with God's aid to relieve. To which store of treasure indeed the merits of the blessed God and of all the elect from the first to the last are found to furnish the basis, of whose consumption or diminution nothing at all should be feared, because of the infinite merits of Christ, so that, whatever may be drawn from it from inclination toward compassion, so much the more the store of those merits increases.[1]

There was little other alteration in the practice of declaring indulgences until the pontificate of Julius II, and the bull *Liquet omnibus*, except in one important item, the sale of indulgences for money. It is a little difficult for us to understand how a practice so shocking to the moral sense could ever have grown up in an institution like the Church, which always professed to believe and teach the ethics of Christ and the apostles, even if it glaringly failed at times to practice them. Just when and how the idea first gained general acceptance that the gift of a sum of money might be regarded as an evidence of penitence, in lieu of other good works, is uncertain. We find, however, that even in Cyprian's time almsgiving was regarded as a part of canonical penitence, but hardly as a substitute for it. Sorrow for sin might be shown by gifts, but peace with the Church could not be so bought. In the eighth and ninth centuries, a gift of money for alms (to be dispensed by the Church, of course) was accepted from those who were unable to keep the required fasts[2] and from this to accepting like gifts instead of prescribed penances was but a short step, involving no new principle. A gift of money was next accepted as an equivalent for bearing arms in person as a crusader, and such a gift entitled the giver to the full indulgence of the crusader. Lucius III seems to be the first Pope who authorized indulgences of this kind (1184),[3] but a movement once begun in this direction would progress rapidly. The need and greed of the medieval Pontiffs would soon suggest to them various ways in which this new principle might be turned to account in filling their ever empty coffers.

[1] Raynaldus, *anno* 1349, *n.* 11. Most authorities give January 27 as the date of this bull, but as quoted by Raynaldus it is distinctly said to be "given at Avignon, xv, *Kal Septembris*," *i. e.*, August 17.

[2] See quotations from sources in Gieseler, 2: 196 *n.* 6, and cf. Haddan and Stubbs, 3: 179, 180, 211, 371 *seq.*

[3] Mansi, 23: 485. By authority of the Pope, the bishops of Normandy decreed that whosoever should give alms for the relief of Jerusalem should receive indulgence for penances enjoined—three years, if the penance exceeded seven years, two years for a penance less than seven years. Those receiving the indulgence must also say the *Pater Noster* three times each day or night.

Moreover, the legal systems of the Middle Ages were wholly favorable to the development of venality in the Church. Every offense against the feudal law might be condoned by the payment of a fine, proportioned to the gravity of the offense. In Germany especially, the old custom of *Wehrgeld*, or blood money—by which murder was punished, not by the death of the offender, but by his payment of a sum equivalent to the dead man's value to his family—was a powerful incentive in the same direction. It had come about in the civil law, therefore, that there was an elaborate scale of fines, by which every wrong to person or property might be expiated. Since the civil law thus accepted a money compensation in lieu of criminal proceedings, there was the less difficulty in transferring the practice to the Church. And so there was, at first, no outraging of ethical sentiments, or at any rate very little, when the Church practically offered to forgive any offense and waive any penalty for a sufficient pecuniary consideration.

The moral revolt came later, when higher ethical principles had been recognized in the civil law, when the effects of such practice on the administration of justice and the deadening of the spiritual life had been observed; when, above all, the shameless greed of the Church had aroused the dormant conscience of the people and provoked the indignant protests of many doctors of the Church. For, as we now know, Luther was not the first to protest against both the theory and the practice of indulgences. Wiclif in England, Hus in Bohemia, and John of Wesel, at Luther's own university of Erfurt, had attacked not merely the abuses, but the foundations of the practice. John of Wesel denied that the Scriptures give to anybody, even the Pope, the power to remit a penalty that God had imposed; all that can be remitted in any case is the penalty that the Church has imposed. He denied that there is any Treasure of merits from which indulgences can be dispensed, showing plainly that the Scriptures give no countenance to such a notion, nor to the idea of superabundant merit, or "merit" of any kind, thus completely demolishing the corner-stone of the doctrine of indulgence. Indulgences therefore are nothing else than a pious fraud practiced on believers. It is true that some years later, on a trial for heresy, he publicly recanted these and other teachings alleged to be heretical, but nothing can alter the fact that he did teach them, and that his writings were widely circulated and influential. One of the Brothers of the Common Life, John Wessel, taught against indulgences, and did not retract. These protests were, however, sporadic, and the knowledge of them was confined to the learned. How narrow on the whole their effect was may be judged from the fact that when Luther began his protest against the abuses of indulgences, he had never heard of these men or their writings.

It was when the consciences of people, especially in Germany, were thus beginning to wake (1510) that the bull of Julius II, *Liquet omnibus*, was published. His pretext was a double one—money was needed for the building of St. Peter's, and also for the repelling of the Turk. The essential paragraph is the following:

> And, that the salvation of souls may be looked after so much the more devoutly, as they have greater need of the prayers of others and are the less able to help themselves, by the aforesaid authority from the treasury of our mother, the Church, moved by paternal affection for the souls now in purgatory, that have departed from this world united to Christ by love, and who while they lived deserved that indulgence of this nature should be obtained for them by intercession, desiring to relieve them as much as by God's help we are able, through divine pity and the plenitude of Apostolic power, we will and grant, that if parents, friends or other Christian believers, actuated by pity, shall give a certain alms for the work of building, in behalf of the souls who are themselves detained in purgatory for the expiation of penalties owed—during the commission of our Nuncio and Agents, according to the regulation of our agents and the deputies and sub-delegates to whom they may commit their powers—the same plenary indulgence will be invoked by way of intercession for those now in purgatory, for whom they have piously paid the said alms, as is already provided for the remission of penalties.

Though the mutterings of discontent grew louder in Germany, the bull of Julius did not provoke any open rebellion.[1] It was reserved for his successor, Leo X, to lay the mine whose explosion rent all Europe asunder. Yet nothing could have seemed less likely to produce such an effect than the two bulls that Leo published, for he did little but repeat what Julius and Clement VI, and other predecessors had said. Nevertheless there were one or two significant additions to his claims, and a very great addition to the shamelessness with which his indulgences were proclaimed and sold in Germany. As these things happened at a moment otherwise favorable for a revolt of Germany against the Papacy, the question of indulgences sufficed, and the dispute that arose was as the letting out of waters. Leo's first bull, *Nos qui pontificatus*, says:

> Trusting in the mercy of the same Omnipotent God, and in the authority of the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and in the word of him who is the way, the truth and the life, and who has said to us, successors in the character of his blessed Peter: "Whatsoever ye bind on earth will be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye loose on

[1] The tradesman Julius cheats the credulous world:
He locks up Heaven, which he possesses not.
Sell what is thine, O Julius! Shameless 'tis
To sell to others what thou lack'st the most.
Ulric von Hutten, Epigrams, Opera, 1: 225.

> earth will be loosed also in heaven"; and also in the plenitude of apostolic power given us from above, we equally grant and permit the full indulgence of all their sins and reconciliation with the Most High, and such remission as has been customarily given through our predecessors to those going to the aid of the Holy Land, and against those perfidious Turks, and such as have been granted in a jubilee year; and we decree that the souls of all those who shall set out on this expedition shall be brought by the power of the holy angels and remain in heaven in eternal felicity.[1]

The laudable purpose of these indulgences was therefore to raise money to be expended in repelling the Turks, who were about this time threatening an invasion of Europe (which did indeed happen in 1529, after many postponements). But it was shrewdly suspected that not much of the money realized would ever find its way to the designated object. The second bull was practically a repetition of that of Julius II, and is known as *Postquam ad Apostolatus*, and is dated September 13, 1517.[2] It promises to "those truly penitent and confessed" who have rendered aid in the building of St. Peter's church, through the nuntio or commissioners appointed, *plenissimum omnium peccatorum suorum remissionem*, and later *plenariam omnium peccatorum indulgentiam et remissionem*. These are less guarded statements than those made by his predecessors, who have carefully left the character and extent of the indulgence vague, or have limited it to the temporal penalties of sin. Now for the first time, it is boldly said that the most complete remission of all sins is given in return for the payment of money.

It was, however, less the erroneous doctrines of the Church regarding indulgences that led Luther to make his famous protest of the theses, than the practical methods that were pursued in Germany. Albert of Brandenburg had been appointed Archbishop of Mainz in 1514, in his twenty-fourth year. To obtain this see, the oldest, richest and most influential in Germany, he had paid the Pope 24,000 florins for the pallium, besides the annates, or first year's income of the see, and certain other customary fees, amounting to fully as much as the pallium money. This large sum he had obtained by loan from the great Augsburg house of Fuggers, the Rothschilds of the sixteenth century. This scandalous transaction was not an unusual one, and while people may have smiled cynically at it, they were not at all shocked—they were used to even worse things.

But having burdened himself with a heavy debt, the youthful prelate was ready to recoup himself in any possible way, and the sooner the better. His opportunity came when Leo proclaimed the indulgence. The papal

[1] Raynaldus, *anno* 1513, *n.* 3, dated iii *non. Septembris.*
[2] *Mag. Bull*, 10: 38–42.

agents, before they could begin their preaching in Germany, must obtain the approbation of its primate, and the terms on which permission was granted them were: the traffic was to last eight years, during which time the preaching of all other indulgences was to be suspended; and the proceeds were to be equally divided between the Archbishop and the Pope. The German primate now issued a "summary instruction" to the preachers, of which the material paragraphs are the following:

> The first grace is the complete remission of all sins; and nothing greater than this grace can be named, since man, who lives in sin and is bereft of the favor of God, obtains complete remission by these means and enjoys God's favor anew; moreover, through this remission of sins the punishment which one is obliged to undergo in purgatory on account of the affront to the Divine Majesty is all remitted, and the pains of purgatory completely blotted out. And though nothing is worthy to be exchanged for such a grace—since it is a gift of God and an inestimable grace—in order that Christian believers may be the more easily induced to procure it, we establish the following rules:
>
> In the first place, everyone who is contrite in heart and with the mouth has made confession—or at all events has the intention of confessing at a suitable time—shall visit at least the seven churches herein indicated for this purpose, namely, those in which the papal arms are displayed, and in each church shall say five Ave Marias in honor of the five wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby our salvation is won, or the Miserere, which psalm is very well adapted for obtaining forgiveness of sins.
>
> Sick persons or those otherwise prevented shall visit with the same devotion and prayers as above, the seven altars which the commissioners and sub-commissioners shall have erected in the church where the cross shall be, and on which they shall hang the papal arms.
>
> Where, however, persons are found so weak that they cannot conveniently come to such a church, then shall their confessor or penitentiary cause an altar to be brought to a convenient place approved by him. And where such persons visit this place and offer up their prayers near the altar or before it, they shall deserve the indulgence as though they had visited the seven churches.
>
> To those also that lie on sick-beds, a holy picture may be sent, before which or near which they may say certain prayers, at the discretion of their confessor, and it shall happen in this place just as if they had visited the seven churches.
>
> When, however, several persons, or a woman, for a good reason demand that they be excused from visiting the said churches and altars, the penitentiaries may, after hearing the reason, substitute a larger contribution for the said visit.
>
> Respecting now the contribution to the chest, for the building of the said church of the chief apostle, the penitentiaries and confessors, after they have explained to those making confession the full remission and privileges, shall ask of them, How much money or

other temporal goods they would conscientiously give for the said most complete remission and privileges? and this shall be done in order that hereafter they may be brought the more easily to contribute.[1] Also because the ranks and occupations of men are so manifold and diverse that we cannot consider them individually, and impose specific rates accordingly, we have therefore concluded that the rates should be determined according to the recognized classes of persons.

Kings and queens and their princes, archbishops and bishops and other great rulers, provided they seek the places where the cross is raised, or otherwise present themselves, shall pay at least five and twenty Rhenish golden guilders. Abbots and the great prelates of cathedral churches, counts, barons, and others of the higher nobility, together with their consorts, shall pay for each letter of indulgence ten such guilders. Other lesser prelates and nobles, as also the rectors of celebrated places, and others, who, either from permanent incomes or merchandise, or otherwise, enjoy a total yearly revenue of five hundred gold guilders, shall pay six such guilders. Other citizens and tradespeople, who usually have an income of two hundred guilders, shall pay three of the same. Other citizens and tradespeople, who have individual incomes and families of their own, shall pay one such guilder; those of less means, only a half. . .

All others, however, are commended to the discretion of the confessors and penitentiaries, who should have at all times before their eyes the completion of this building, and should urge their penitents to give more, but should let no one go away without grace, since the good of Christian believers is not less to be sought than that of the building. Therefore those that have no money shall make their contribution with prayer and fasting. For the kingdom of heaven should be open to the rich no more than to the poor. . . . .

The third aforesaid grace is a letter of indulgence, full of the greatest, generally comforting and hitherto unheard-of powers, which will always have its force, when the eight years of our bull are at an end, since the text of the bull says: *nunc et in perpetuum participes fiant*, they will become partakers now and forever. .

The contents of the same the preacher and confessor shall explain and exalt with all their powers. For there will be given in the letter of indulgence, to those that buy it: first, the right to choose a qualified confessor, even a priest of one of the mendicant orders, who may at once absolve them from all censures, even *ab homine lata*,[2] with consent of the parties; secondly, from all sins, even the gravest, including those reserved for the Apostolic See, both in life and in the hour of death. . .

The third principal grace is the participation in all the possessions of the Church universal; which consists herein, that contributors toward said building, together with their deceased relatives, who have departed this world in a state of grace, shall from now on, and

[1] It will be seen that the principle avowed by modern corporations, to "tax the traffic all that it will bear," was discovered and practised by the medieval Church. Truly, there is nothing new under the sun.

[2] Excommunication *ab homine lata* was a censure pronounced against a judge, and lasted as long as he lived.

for eternity, be partakers of all petitions, intercessions, alms, fastings, prayers, in each and every pilgrimage, even those to the Holy Land; furthermore, in the stations at Rome, in masses, in canonical hours, flagellations, and all other spiritual goods which have been, or shall be, brought forth by the universal, most holy Church militant or by any of its members. Believers who purchase confessional letters become participants in all these things. Preachers and confessors must insist with great diligence upon this power and persuade believers not to neglect to buy these benefits and the letter of indulgence.

We also declare that, in order to obtain these two most important graces it is not necessary to make confession, or to visit the churches and altars but merely to buy the letter of indulgence. . . .

The fourth most important grace is for the souls that are in purgatory, namely, a complete remission of all sins, which remission the Pope brings to pass through his intercession, to the advantage of said souls, in this wise: that the same contribution shall be placed in the chest by a living person as one would make for himself. It is our wish, however, that our sub-commissioners should modify the regulations regarding contributions of this kind which are given for the dead, and that they should use their judgment in all other cases, where, in their opinion, modifications are desirable. It is also not necessary that the persons who place their contributions in the chest should be contrite in heart and have orally confessed, since this grace is based simply on the state of grace in which the dead departed, and on the contribution of the living, as is evident from the text of the bull. Moreover, preachers shall exert themselves to give this grace the widest publicity, since through the same, help will surely come to departed souls, and at the same time the construction of the church of St. Peter will be effectively and abundantly promoted.[1]

The papal bulls pretended that indulgences were granted for the benefit of the people, but the truth will out occasionally, even in ecclesiastical documents, and this Instruction is almost cynically frank in its commercialism. No reader will fail to remark how cunningly it is contrived to get a contribution—large or small, but as large as possible—from everybody except from those who had no money to give. So much is left to the discretion of the commissioners, too, that they might do almost anything that they pleased. It is obvious that the character of the commissioner would determine the manner in which these indulgences would be proclaimed. An eye-witness has informed us of the pains that were taken to impress the people with the value of this grace. "When the commissary entered a town, the bull was borne before him

[1] Inasmuch as this document does not give the official teaching of the Church, but only the actual practice in Germany, it has been thought sufficient to give the translation merely. The document will be found in Latin in Gerdsii, *Introductio in Historiam Evangelii Seculo xvi*, Vol. 1, Appendix, pp. 83–113, and in German in Walch, 15: 302–333.

on a velvet or golden cloth, and a procession was formed of all the priests, monks, the town council, schoolmaster, scholars, men, women, maidens and children, with banners and candles and song. Then they rang all bells, sounded all organs. When he came to the church, he raised a red cross in the middle of the church, and hung the Pope's banner on it. In sum, men could not have given greater welcome and honor to God himself."[1] The agent selected for Germany was John Tetzel, a native of Leipzig and a Dominican monk, a man of more than dubious character and of little learning, but possessing the two necessary qualifications for a successful indulgence-monger: a front of brass and the voice of a bull of Bashan. He had been many years engaged in the work, and had been uniformly successful in securing large sums of money. This more than atoned, in the eyes of his superiors, for any shortcomings in conduct or character. Luther calls him "a boisterous fellow," and he was soon abandoned by his employers and supporters after the trouble began, and died not long after in disgrace and neglect.

Sellers of indulgences had been prohibited some years previously from entering Saxony, less because of any ethical objections to their trade, probably, than because the Elector hated to see so much good German gold and silver going Romeward. Germany had long been called "the milch cow of the papacy," and it was a constant complaint that the Pope got more revenue from Germans than their own princes. Elector Frederick refused to relax this prohibition even for the Archbishop of Mainz, and so Tetzel was compelled to halt at Jüterbock, a town near to the Saxon borders and only a few miles from Wittenberg. There he did a roaring trade, the echoes of which began to reach Luther in the quiet of his theological studies and pastoral duties. It is probable that he would have paid no attention to the matter, if his work as parish priest had not brought the abuse forcibly to his attention. He found that some of his people visited Jüterbock and bought indulgences, and when they confessed showed him these documents and claimed that they were free from the penance that he wished to impose. He refused to grant absolution to holders of Tetzel's indulgences, and preached against them from his pulpit. They then complained to Tetzel, who publicly denounced opponents of the indulgence as heretics, and had a fire kindled in the market-place of Jüterbock, as he said, to burn "those who blasphemed the most holy Pope and his most holy indulgence."[2] Luther

[1] Myconius, *Historia Reformationis*, 1517–1542, ed. Cyprian, Leipzig, 1718, p. 15.

[2] Specimens of Tetzel's indulgences survive, and the following is given by the editors of Luther's Latin Works: "May our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee and absolve thee by the merits of his passion. And I, by his and apostolic authority, granted and committed to me in this region, do absolve thee, first, from every sentence of excommunication, major or minor, however incurred, and then from all thy sins, by conferring on thee the fullest remission of thy sins

was greatly disturbed, not by Tetzel's threats, but because, as he said, the wolf was preying on his sheep, endangering the souls of his people, by leading them to place reliance for the forgiveness of their sins and their final salvation on these bits of purchased paper, rather than on the mercy of God and the merits of Christ. Yet what could a simple monk, an obscure professor, do to stem the flood that the leaders of the Church had let loose? As he looked at himself, Luther was conscious that he was too ignorant and inexperienced, and too lacking in influence, to make any great stir, but he would do what he could.

He began by preaching to his own people the true doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, as revealed in the Scriptures. Then he wrote respectful but urgent letters to his diocesan, the bishop of Brandenburg, and to the primate of Germany, the Archbishop of Mainz,[1] begging them to interfere and restrain the excesses of Tetzel, whose impudence and blasphemous utterances, if they did not quite go to the extremes that the gossip of the time alleged, were at any rate a scandal. So little did he know of the world, so ignorant was he of the interest that Archbishop Albert had in the sale of indulgences, that he was painfully surprised when he found that his remonstrances were unheeded. He had supposed his superiors to be ignorant of what was going on, and needing only to be informed to stop the abuses at once. He had still one resource: he might rouse the attention of scholars to the evils that he deplored, through an academic disputation. Accordingly, he prepared ninety-five theses regarding indulgences, propositions that he offered to debate with all comers, with a view to eliciting the truth. As was the custom in the university in such cases, he nailed a copy of the theses to the doors of the Schlosskirche, October 31, 1517. There was nothing dramatic or exceptional about the act; it was wholly ordinary and commonplace; yet the world has ever since heard in the strokes of that hammer the signal of the outbreak of the Reformation struggle. The eve of All-saints day was chosen for this challenge, because this was one of the most frequented feasts, and would bring to the church a large concourse of professors, students and visitors.[2]

[and] by remitting even the pains of purgatory, as far as the keys of our holy mother Church extend. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." LOL 1: 267. Compare an earlier form of indulgence (fourteenth century) given by Collier, "Ecclesiastical History of England," 3: 178.

[1] Myconius says (p. 22) that Luther also wrote to four other bishops: Meissen, Frankfurt, Zeits and Merseburg, but Luther does not himself mention them. The only letter extant is that to the Archbishop of Mainz, LOL 1: 255 *seq.*

[2] It must not be overlooked that Luther was antagonizing not only the Pope but the Elector, in the doctrine of the theses. A special indulgence was attached to the veneration of the relics that the Elector had brought from Palestine and deposited in the Schlosskirche, to view which many would come on the following day.

We must carefully resist the temptation to read subsequent history into this incident, however, or into the theses themselves. They were interpreted as a challenge to the Pope and the whole Roman system, and they may be granted, in view of following events, to have had such a significance; but nothing is more certain than that Luther did not so regard them at the time. We do not need to appeal to his frequent assertions of his innocent, purely academic intent;[1] the theses themselves bear on their surface the evidence of their purpose. No Protestant ever read them for the first time without being astonished at their lack of Protestantism. They are the theses of a Catholic, who believes heartily (or supposes that he does) in Church and Pope, and even in indulgences, concerned only to free the matter from current misunderstandings on the part of those untrained in theology, to correct the abuses that have grown up, and to free Church and Pope from undeserved odium. The author indignantly repudiates the notion that he is a heretic, and asserts that both he and his doctrine are uncondemned by authority in the Church, and only denounced by the ignorant. Yet, as a whole, these propositions are far more radical and thorough-going in their questioning of papal powers, and even of the whole Catholic system, than Luther at all realized.[2]

But while we must be thus careful in our interpretation, it is fair to read the theses in the light of Luther's own subsequent enlargement and explanation of them, save where there has evidently been a progress in his ideas, as is sometimes the case. Caution is therefore necessary even here, lest we give to the propositions a meaning that they did not have when Luther wrote them. And we must likewise be on our guard against an attempt to find in such a series of academic propositions a systematic and consistent doctrine of indulgences. No such character was required of them by the academic standards of the time, or is to be expected by us. Luther's was not a systematic mind; at bottom he was neither philosopher nor theologian, and at no time in his life did he show himself capable of working out a systematic and complete exposition and defense of any doctrine. We need not be astonished to find that some of the theses are not easily reconcilable with others, or if some seem flatly to contradict others. Yet, while all this is true, it by no means follows that we have an incoherent collection of contradictory propositions. Two

[1] See, among other passages, LOL 2: 134, 136.

[2] The Latin text of the Theses is given in Ranke's *Deutsche Geschichte*, 6: 83–89 from an original copy in the Royal Library at Berlin. See also LOL, 1: 285, Löscher, 1: 438 (with German in parallel column). It is cast upon the bronze doors of the Schlosskirche, the gift of King Frederick William IV, in 1858, replacing the wooden doors of Luther's day, which were burned in 1760. An English version by Wace and Bucheim is reprinted by Schaff, 6: 160, and in the "Translations and Reprints" of the University of Pennsylvania, vol. 2, no. 6, and in Appendix I of this book.

ideas were still struggling within Luther's soul for the mastery: the idea of God's grace in the forgiveness of sin, and the idea of the Church as the divinely appointed agency of man's salvation. This conflict of ideas is distinctly reflected in the theses—the author is striving as best he may to reconcile them. His experience of God's grace is too recent and too vivid for him to deny it; but neither is he yet ready to give up his inherited and inbred belief in the divine authority of the Church.

The theses begin with a definition that goes to the root of the questions at issue. Luther maintains that repentance, as Christ taught it, means something more than sacramental penance. It is not an act merely, but a state of mind; it is the entire life of the believer. This repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit. At one time, as he wrote Staupitz, the very word "repentance" was bitter to him; it pierced him as a sharp arrow; but when he came to understand it, no word had a sweeter sound.[1] His opponents were quick to see how radical this definition was, and made haste to assert that Christ did teach sacramental penance.

What value, then, has sacramental penance? It is a test of contrition (12). No one can be certain of the reality of his own contrition (39), unless it seeks punishment (40); therefore, if genuine, repentance will manifest itself in mortification of the flesh. The works of the law are here put in their proper place, as the fruits of the new life, not the producing cause of it; they do not secure salvation, they merely show that one is a saved man. It is clear that Luther has no idea of denying the value, the necessity even, of sacramental penance; but he would make everything else secondary to the contrition of the heart.

Having thus cleared the way, he proceeds to the question of indulgences, and at one blow sweeps away the whole system. He who is truly penitent has no need of indulgences, since God himself gives him plenary pardon (36), and any further assurance from the Pope is superfluous (87). Yet it is one of the curious inconsistences of the theses that, having thus declared indulgences to be an impertinence, and as a hope of salvation vain (52), Luther turns about and says that "Christians should be taught that the Pope's pardons are useful, if they do not trust in them" (49), and that "he who speaks against the truth of apostolic pardons, let him be anathema and accursed" (71).

Very explicit, however, is the repudiation of the extravagant claims that have been made by some theologians as to the papal powers in the matter of indulgences, but never asserted by any Pope for himself. The Pope cannot remit the guilt (*culpa*) of sin, "except by declaring it remitted and approving the remission of God" (6), but such remission is by no means to be despised (38). What the Pope has the power to remit is the canoni-

[1] LOL, 2: 130.

cal penalties, or those imposed by the authority of the Church (5, 6), and he means only these whenever he speaks of plenary remission (20), so that none are entitled to say in his name that all punishment due for sin is remitted by indulgences (21). But the seventh thesis seems to assert more for the ordinary priest, who confesses a penitent, than is thus allowed to the Pope, for it declares that God, in remitting guilt, subjects the penitent in all things to his vicar, the priest. This can be understood only in the light of Luther's later explanation, which was a transcript of his personal experience regarding the Church and the forgiveness of sins:

> Salvation begins in trouble.* God first condemns, then justifies; first tears down, then builds up; first smites, then heals; first kills, then makes alive! God begins (the work is his) by bestowing the work of contrition. When this grace comes, not knowing that it is grace, the man feels that he is in the deepest condemnation. In himself he finds no peace and can find none until he flees for refuge to the power of the Church. He confesses his sin and misery to the priest and demands a solace and a remedy. The priest, relying on the power given him for having compassion, absolves him and gives peace to his conscience. This peace comes through faith; that is, the unquestioning belief of the promise of Christ to the priests, "Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The remission is not for the sake of the priest himself, or of his power, but for the sake of Christ's word, which cannot lie. Just so far as a man has faith in that word, he will have peace. But if anyone does not believe this word, he will never be at rest, though he should be absolved a thousand times by the Pope himself, and confess to the whole world. This, then, is that sweet power, for which, from the bottom of our hearts, we ought to give thanks to God, who has given such power to men, which is the unique consolation of sinners and of troubled consciences, if only they believe that the promises of Christ are true.[1]

The next matter to be considered in the theses is the relation of indulgences to the souls in purgatory. Luther is still a thorough believer in purgatory, and remained in this belief for some years after the publication of the theses. He believed in the power of the living to do much, by prayers and fasts and alms, for the relief of suffering souls, but he did not believe that such relief could come by way of indulgences. The papal remission is valid only for the living (8, 10, 13), for canonical penances cannot be imposed on the dead and ought not to be. As to souls in purgatory, the Pope has no more power than any bishop, or even the

[1] While repentance and faith were the ground of the remission of guilt by God, Luther appears to have held that the remission was not actually completed until declared in the absolution of priest or Pope. The above is somewhat abridged from LOL, 2: 152 *seq.*

curate of a parish—he can only intercede for them, and his power of the keys cannot be supposed to extend to them (25, 26). It would seem to be implied in this that the value of such intercession would depend on the personal sanctity of the Pope, and his consequent ability to prevail with God in prayer. Officially, as Pope, he could do nothing for souls in purgatory. In particular, he cannot promise a share of the benefits of Christ and his Church, since these are a free gift of God to all believers, which needs no letters of pardon to secure it (37); nor can he dispense pardons from the Treasure of the Church, for such a Treasure is not known to exist, being "neither sufficiently named nor known among the people of Christ" (56). No fewer than ten theses (57-66) are devoted to this aspect of indulgences, of which the most radical proposition is the assertion that the only real Treasure of merits is the grace of God as made known in the Gospel (62 cf. 78); and the most startling thesis of all is the concluding charge that these undefined treasures of indulgences have become nothing but nets "with which they fish for the riches of men" (66).

No part of the theses gave greater offense than this, but Luther said in his explanations that he wished merely to dispute these matters, and sought only to learn the truth. Yet he does not deny that these theses really expressed the opinion that he even then held,[1] and in his later exposition he went into the matter at some length. "They say that the saints in this life wrought many works beyond what they owed, works of supererrogation which have not been rewarded, but are laid up in the Treasure of the Church. With these, certain worthy compensation is made by means of indulgences; and so they will have it that the saints make satisfaction for us." But Luther denied this teaching, and showed that it was clearly unscriptural. The testimonies of Scripture are clear that God rewards men beyond their deserts, and Christ has himself taught us that when we have done all, we are still unprofitable servants. He had no difficulty in showing that the Fathers confirmed Scripture—Augustine, for instance, teaching that all saints need to pray, Forgive us our debts. And he ended by saying, "From which, and many other things too tedious to mention, I conclude that there are no superfluous merits of the saints which may help us in laziness. In reference to these things that I now say, I protest that I have no doubt, and I am prepared to endure fire and death for them, and I assert that everyone who thinks differently is a heretic."[2]

[1] In commenting on Eck's second Obelisk, Luther says: "In that proposition as indeed in all the rest, I determine nothing; I dispute, but in my heart I believe most of them true. Yet, I am only a man, having no authority in this matter to do anything but dispute." LOL, 1: 414.

[2] LOL, 2: 258 *seq.*

Luther was of course at once reproached as a resister of the authority of the Church and the Pope. Did not the Pope issue indulgences, and had not the Church approved them, at least by its silence, for centuries? Could Luther presume to think himself the only one who held the truth about these things? "I am not alone," he replied to such attacks, "the truth is with me and many others, those who have doubted and still doubt whether indulgences are of any force. The Pope is also with me; for while he grants indulgences, he has never said that they are given from a Treasure of the merits of Christ and the Church. The whole Church is also with me, for certainly the Church thinks with and as the Pope thinks. Although St. Thomas and the rest are very distinguished men, the truth is to be preferred to them. They have often been accused of making mistakes. More than this, for three hundred years universities and learned men have persistently studied Aristotle, and do not understand him—and scatter through the whole Church error and pretended knowledge. If for so long a time and among the greatest intellects God has permitted so much of cloud and darkness to reign, why are we so secure, and why do we not rather hold all our opinions doubtful, that Christ alone may be light, righteousness, truth, wisdom, all our good?"[1]

At the same time that Luther thus boldly questions the Pope's power to issue such indulgences as Tetzel was proclaiming, he takes special pains to show respect for what he believed to be the real papal powers, and makes it clear that he believes the abuses of which he complained to be contrary to the Pope's will (91). The Pope is opposed to all contrivances to the injury of holy charity and truth (74), is desirous that the pure Gospel should be preached (55), does not authorize or approve the excessive zeal of men like Tetzel (70), and if he were acquainted with their exactions, he would prefer that the basilica of St. Peter should rather be burnt to ashes than that it should be built up with the skin, flesh and bones of his sheep (50). Poor Luther! How little he knew what manner of man Leo X was! The thesis in which he said that the Pope desired that prayer should be made for him, more than that money should be given (48), was regarded at Rome as an exquisite joke.

The whole question of Tetzel and his indulgences, like so much that was once regarded as settled, has been reopened in our day by Roman writers, who have declared that Luther was guilty of gross exaggeration and misrepresentation in his theses. In this they have been followed by some Protestant writers, whose idea of impartiality is to reserve their severest censures for members of their own party. But the great obstacle in the way of applying a coat of brilliant whitewash to Tetzel

[1] LOL, 2: 266, 267.

is the contemporary writings of his Catholic supporters. He was accused of saying,

> Sobald der Pfennig im Kasten klingt
> Die Seele aus dem Fegfeuer springt.

Luther refers to this and condemns it in theses 27 and 28, but Prierias took up the gauntlet and defended the saying as pure Catholic doctrine, to be accepted as literally true.[1] Luther represents indulgence-mongers as going to the extreme of declaring that even if a man had violated the mother of God, the indulgence would remove his guilt (75), and called this "madness"; but Prierias rejoined: "To assert that one who has the plenitude of power from the Pope to pardon can absolve from guilt in the case mentioned by the key of order, and from punishment by the key of jurisdiction, is not to think insanely, but rationally."[2] When the confidential agent of Leo X thus approved the worst extravagances attributed to Tetzel, it is evident that no modern afterthoughts can undo his act. No possible amount of apologetic disinfectants will make the name of Tetzel smell sweet again.[3]

There has also been revived a theory, first advanced by Cochlæus, to account for Luther's opposition to Tetzel and the indulgence-mongering, that it was at bottom nothing else than jealousy of a rival order: the real grievance being, not that indulgences were sold, but that the business had been committed to the Dominicans instead of the Augustinians. According to Cochlæus, Staupitz was the instigator of the campaign against indulgences, but Luther, whom he had attempted to use as an instrument, outstripped and eclipsed him, because of an ardent nature.[4] Cochlæus is so far right, that the Augustinian order had been previously concerned in proclaiming and defending indulgences. A member of Luther's own monastery at Erfurt, Johann von Paltz, in his *Supplementum Coelifodinae* (1502), had undertaken to expound and defend the doctrine of indulgence. He taught the doctrine in its most extreme form, setting no limits to the Pope's power to absolve from sin and release souls from purgatory. It is not likely that Luther knew anything about this book, which was published three years before he

[1] LOL, 1: 357.

[2] *Non est insanire, sed sane sentire.* LOL, 1: 371.

[3] The impression is general among Protestants that, since the Reformation, the Roman Church has done away with the sale of indulgences. That such is not yet the case, but that she has in modern times, where not actively opposed by Protestantism, not only preserved this abuse, but managed ingeniously to join it with an appeal to the passion for gambling so strong in many races, let this extract testify, from an advertisement in a Brazilian newspaper of 1910: "RAFFLE OF SOULS. During the last raffle of souls the following numbers . . . gained the prize, and those that have had the good luck to draw these numbers may be certain that their dead loved ones are liberated from the flames of purgatory."

[4] *Acta et Scripta Martini Lutheri*, pp. 3, 4.

entered the convent. But if he did not know his order's previous history in connection with indulgences, Staupitz must have been better informed. Yet no one can read the letters and sermons of Luther of this early time without coming to the conclusion that he was not urged by Staupitz to compose and post his theses, or moved by any motive save that which he avowed: the good of his people and the honor of the Church. He thought to promote both, not to advance either his own fortunes or those of his order.

Those who have seen in this question of indulgences only a trifling matter, which circumstances made the occasion of a formidable schism in the Church, have not apprehended its significance, any better than Luther did at the time. He had no notion of raising a standard of revolt against Church and Pope, or of denying what he conceived to be the legitimate functions of either. But when he taught that Christ had made complete satisfaction for all sins, and that the penitent is assured of participation in those benefits by faith, he swept away the whole Roman system of works and merits, and made the theology of Thomas Aquinas an absolute nullity. If this were true, indulgences were an impertinence, and the sale of them a public scandal. No attack on the Church, its theology and practice, could have been more formidable than this; and the propounder of the theses had as yet no adequate idea of what he had done.

Hence it was that Luther was amazed at the consequences of his act. The theses were at once printed, though not by his permission or wish, reprinted again and again, scattered broadcast over Germany, read by many thousands of the people of all ranks, discussed, and by the vast majority welcomed with loud acclaim. It was the first great demonstration of the power of the printing-press. Gutenberg had made a Luther possible, and insured that he should not be suppressed by authority without a hearing. And if Luther did not understand the significance of his theses, Germany did. The quick and enthusiastic response of the people was not to their doctrine so much as to their practical bearing. Men everywhere were tired of the extortion of Rome, they had been exploited to the limit of their endurance and beyond, and they heard gladly the note of rebellion in the theses. They only needed an excuse to rebel against, they but demanded a champion to fight, this greedy plunderer of Italy. The instinct of the people, rather than any logical deduction from any or from all of his propositions, told them that here was a man of clear perceptions, of undaunted spirit, ready to challenge iniquity in the highest places, willing to dare all for what he believed with all his soul to be the truth—in short, the very leader for whom they were longing. And the heart of Germany was given to Luther for life!

CHAPTER III

IN CONFLICT WITH THE POPE

WHEN some sufficient answer could be given to Luther's theses, the indulgence traffic was already at an end in Germany. The first attempt at a reply came from Tetzel. He proposed to hold two disputations, both at Frankfort-on-Oder, the first "for the defense of the Catholic faith and for the honor of the apostolic see," the second simply "for the honor of the apostolic see."[1] The first theses, to the number of 106, were devoted to the explanation, reassertion and defense of indulgences; the second series of fifty were devoted to magnifying the Pope's power. The first series rather strengthened than weakened Luther's cause, by showing that he had not misstated the case between himself and his opponents. They have been appropriately published in Luther's works as "documents for promoting the Reformation." Tetzel complains that Luther had not truly represented his manner of preaching, that without having heard him the Wittenberg professor had accepted the exaggerated reports of others. It is likely that many things were attributed to Tetzel that ought to be credited to his subordinates, that some things were misunderstood, and that some were perverted. But still, his own words stand against him. In his propositions he reaffirmed the things that Luther especially condemned: asserted that repentance taught by Christ is the same as sacramental penance; that satisfaction must be made by men, by suffering the unremitted part of the penalty of sin, either in this life or in purgatory; and many of the other things that he was charged with preaching. He taught besides, that those who had neglected salvation until their dying day, if they should feel the least contrition, might have their eternal punishment changed into temporal; and although this punishment should be very great, it could be quickly relaxed by plenary pardons, or indulgences. In other words, however great a sinner a man might have been all his life, his friends ought not to be discouraged. It was at least possible that he was in purgatory, and if in purgatory his great sufferings could be at once ended by the purchase of a papal pardon for him.

In regard to the power of the Pope, Tetzel maintained the extreme papal doctrine. In this case, however, the important thing is not what he taught, but the fact that he devotes a separate discussion to the

[1] For both series of Tetzel's theses, see Appendix II.

position of the Pope. The special defense indicated the point that needed special defense. Luther had not directly attacked the Pope's power, but first, the current doctrine of repentance, and then the sale of indulgences as based on that doctrine. But the discussion had not even reached its second stage before it was disclosed that, as indulgences were issued by the authority of the Pope, the Pope's authority was to be questioned and defined. Luther complained that his opponents attempted to put the Pope between them and harm. So they did. They had a right so to do, for they were acting in his name. To attack them was really to attack the Pope, unless they had gone beyond their commission. Some have thought that Tetzel and the rest acted unskillfully in directing the controversy toward the Pope, and that abler men might have confined it to the one question of indulgences. A better understanding of the case shows that they had no choice; they were powerless in the grip of an overmastering and merciless logic. And so was Luther; he had called up a spirit that would not down at his bidding. For the present, at least, the battle must rage about the Pope.

Tetzel's disputations were not held until January, 1518; his "Positions" were published before the close of the year 1517. About the same time, Sylvester Prierias, Master of the Sacred Palace, Papal Inquisitor, etc., published his "Dialogue against the presumptuous conclusions of Martin Luther," which he dedicated to Leo X. It might be called a dialogue, because it gave alternately a proposition from Luther and a paragraph of reply by Prierias. It is slight, hastily written and touches the questions at issue in a dainty, condescending way. Prierias was in Rome, where the Pope's power enveloped all things like an atmosphere, and he had no conception of the gravity of the situation, or of the character of the man with whom he was dealing. Copies of his book reached Wittenberg in January, 1518. Luther did not at first know how to treat it; for a time he thought no notice should be taken of it, pretending to think that it was a forgery—that some obscure person, writing in the name of a high papal official, wished to provoke him to reply."[1]

The Dialogue of Prierias was mainly on the power of the Pope. He, too, saw that indulgences involved the papacy, and that the question of the Pope's power came logically before the question of indulgences. He began by laying down four *fundamenta*, or primary principles: 1. The Roman Church is virtually the Church universal, and the Pope is virtually

[1] LOL, 1: 341 *seq.* Recent investigations have shown that Prierias did not "rush in where angels fear to tread," but had been requested by Leo to give an expert opinion on the theses. His dialogue was, therefore, a semi-official refutation of Luther's doctrine, especially those theses that related to the papal supremacy. See especially Böhmer, *Luther im Lichte der neueren Forschung*. Leipzig, 1906; 2nd. ed. 1910.

the Roman Church. 2. The universal Church is infallible, and this includes both the infallibility of an ecumenical council and the infallibility of the Pope. 3. Whoever does not rely on the teaching of the Roman Church and of the Roman Pontiff as an infallible rule of faith, from which even the Scripture draws strength and authority, is a heretic. 4. Not only what the Roman Church teaches, but also what the Church does, is to be accepted as infallible and of divine authority; its example is as potent as its word. From all this it follows that he who says the Roman Church cannot do in reference to indulgences what in fact it has already done, is a heretic.[1]

Luther changed his mind and wrote a hasty but vigorous reply to the Dialogue. He, too, began with foundation principles. The first is taken from the Apostle Paul: "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." And again, "If an angel from heaven preach to you another Gospel than that which ye have received, let him be anathema." The second is from Augustine: "Only to those books that are called canonical have I taught that this honor should be given, that I must firmly believe that no writer of them has erred. As to the rest, however strong they may be in doctrine and holiness, I do not therefore believe a thing because they have thought it true." The third is from Pope Clement VI, and forbids indulgence-sellers to promise the people anything, except it is expressly contained in their letters of instruction. Luther thought that these principles, properly understood, completely refuted Prierias and his book.[2]

The *fundamenta* of these two opponents show that they were the representatives, not of new but of old Church parties. These parties, in the lapse of time and by change of circumstances, had advanced; sharp conflicts had led to clearer definition and more pronounced assertion. Prierias, a little more precisely than earlier writers, claimed the infallibility of the Pope, as being virtually the infallibility of the Church. Luther, on the other hand, claims with more distinctness than usual the sole infallibility of the canonical Scriptures, and the right to question anything not taught in them. He does this, however, in the words of Augustine. The controversy, by an inevitable movement, freed itself from accidental concernments; what at first appeared to be only the case of indulgences was coming out nakedly as the case of the Pope.

The papal cause was on the defensive, and therefore at a disadvantage. It was also thus far unfortunate in its advocates; Tetzel's "Positions"

[1] After laying down these fundamenta, Prierias banteringly says, *Age, tunc, Martine, et tuas conclusiones in medium offeras.*

[2] The *Responsio* fills about sixty pages of Luther's works. He says it was written in two days. *Ecce, mi R. P. cursim et duobus diebus tibi haec reddidi quid visa sunt levicula, quae to opposuisti, ideo extempore et ut in buccam venit tibi respondi.* LOL, 2: 67.

were not forceful; it might be suspected that Prierias was a simpleton.[1] A third adversary, John Eck, was a man of more importance—vice-chancellor of the university of Ingolstadt, a doctor of theology, a celebrated disputant and author—and even Luther spoke of him as a man of real learning and culture.[2] He wrote thirty "Obelisks," as he called them, against Luther's theses. As they were written early in the controversy, about the beginning of the year 1518, they treated principally the doctrine of repentance and the character of the sufferings in purgatory; they touched lightly, hardly at all, on the question of the Pope's power. They were brief criticisms of selected propositions from the theses, free, incisive, outspoken, but there was little in them that went beyond the bounds of legitimate controversy. There were several things, however, that made them particularly worrying to Luther and his friends; chief of which was the fact that Eck had but recently become acquainted with the Wittenberg professors, and had shown a marked disposition to cultivate their friendship. His attack on Luther was of the nature of a surprise. Besides, Luther complained that Eck treated him ungenerously, called him violent, a Bohemian, a heretic, seditious, rash, impudent; said he was inept, unlearned, a contemner of the Pope, and other things little less unpleasant.

Eck was probably too harshly judged, and Luther was oversensitive. The Ingolstadt professor was anxious to avoid a break with his new friends, and explained that he had written his "Obelisks" at the instance of his diocesan, the bishop of Eichstadt, and for his use alone; that they were not printed or intended for general circulation, and he was mortified that they had gotten abroad. They had been written hastily, and, not intending them for the public, he had written them with less reserve than he would have used if he had ever expected them to be seen by Luther, whom he had no wish to injure. These things he said in a letter to Carlstadt, who, as he had heard, was preparing a reply to the "Obelisks." He wished to avoid a controversy with the Wittenbergers and to retain their friendship, but his letter failed of its purpose—Carlstadt had already replied in disputations at the university.[3] Luther replied

[1] He was already growing old, and complains of faculties made sluggish by age and disease. He did not at once reply to Luther's rejoinder. It was in November, 1519, that his *Replica* was printed at Rome. His *Epitoma* came later. In 1520 Luther printed it with brief notes, as he did the *Replica*. His first notice of Prierias was comparatively moderate in tone. He closed his *Responsio* by advising Prierias, if he should continue the controversy, to come better prepared: *Vide ut Thomam tuum armatiorem producas in arenum.* Later he used more bitterness. In private letters he ridiculed the mistakes of Prierias, and quoted the wits of Basel who called him the cook instead of the Master of the sacred palace—*magirum* (*magister*) *palatii sacri.*

[2] *Insignis veraeque ingeniosae eruditionis, et eruditi ingenii homo.*—LOL, 1: 406.

[3] Carlstadt's *Conclusiones* and *Defensio* may be found in Löscher, 2: 78 *seq.*

later in his "Asterisks";[1] and, as is not unusual in controversy, he attributed to Eck offensive epithets that the latter had not used, while he used others toward Eck even more offensive than those of which he complained. The controversy, of no great importance in itself, had an important influence in determining the course of events: it called out Carlstadt, Luther's first active associate in his work against indulgences, and it produced a permanent estrangement between Eck and his opponents. Both parties had just enough of controversy to make them wish for more; each had a score to settle. Eck, in particular, was restless, enterprising, unforgetting, unforgiving, and wished and watched for an opportunity to meet Luther and Carlstadt on another field. Thus the "Obelisks," a slight thing, of which he thought little and from which he expected nothing, was Eck's first step toward becoming a prominent actor in a great drama.

Things had moved rapidly. In less than three months after the theses were posted Tetzel, Prierias and Eck had written replies to them, and Luther was not long silent. Not only the questions in dispute, but also the disputants themselves were brought prominently before the public. It was much that the parties could be clearly discriminated and the fundamental principles of each be understood, but in every dispute there is an interest that attaches to the disputants, quite independent of the importance of the questions involved.[2] It was of prime importance, therefore, that Luther should have the sympathy of the people; and his evident acquaintance with the subjects discussed, his bold and incisive style, his courage and earnestness, all conciliated favor. His adversaries' lack of the things that most pleased in him, put them at a disadvantage; the contempt that men had for them was carried over to the cause they advocated. Had they been abler men, or had he been less able, had they disputed better or he not so well, things might have gone differently. But this does not state the whole case. The cause was something, the personal character and skill of the disputants was something, but their manner of disputing was also something. What is proof at one time is not proof at another—every age has standards of authority peculiar to itself. Luther appealed to men's moral instincts, to the older Fathers of the Church, and to the authority of Scripture; his adversaries used scholastic methods that were already discredited, quoted scholastic authorities that had already been cast down from their preëminence, and appealed to the authority of the Pope, which was itself in dispute.

[1] LOL, 1: 406 *seq.*

[2] "Between ourselves," Goethe wrote to Knebel, "there is nothing interesting in the whole Reformation except the character of Luther; and he, moreover, is the only thing which made an actual impression on the multitude." (Quoted by Eucken, "The Problem of Life," p. 273.) This is an exaggeration, but has a large basis of truth.

They were using antiquated weapons; they were turning wheels that were out of gear. Luther belonged to the coming, his adversaries to the receding, age.

It was the Dialogue of Prierias that first indicated the attitude of Leo X to Luther and his teaching. In February, 1518, he was already considering what ought to be done. He wrote to Gabriel Venetus, General of the Augustinians: "I wish you would undertake, by the authority that your office gives you, to restrain Martin Luther, a monk of your order, who, as I suppose you know, is unsettling matters in Germany by teaching men to follow new doctrines. If you act promptly, it will be easy to extinguish the flame now just kindled. For disturbances, while small and only rising, cannot withstand vigorous measures of repression. But if you delay, and the evil gains strength, I fear that when we wish to put the fire out we cannot do it."[1] This indicates prudence and a clear understanding of what ought to be done in a given understood case; the difficulty was to understand this particular case. Luther's work might come to naught if left alone; opposition might make matters worse; prompt, vigorous measures might be effective. Who could tell which was best? We understand the situation far better than the Pope did, but it is still difficult to say what would have been wisest.

The Pope, not knowing exactly what to do, vacillated. That he did so is hardly to be reckoned against him; certainly his failure to meet and overcome the difficulties of the situation was not due to his lack of ability as a man, or his position as a ruler. His history was unique. He was perhaps the only one of the long line of Popes who from his birth was designed and educated for that high office. He was born Giovanni di Medici, December 11, 1475, and his father was the celebrated Lorenzo di Medici, the greatest of the makers of Florence. At thirteen he was made a cardinal by Innocent VIII, at seventeen he took up his residence at Rome. His own character, conduct and attainments coöperated with the powerful interest in his favor, and on the death of Julius II (February 21, 1513) he was elected Pope (March 11), when he was thirty-seven years old, taking the papal throne with the name of Leo X. He had enjoyed a long experience in the ordinary affairs of Rome and the Papacy, but this, in the long run, instead of being of service to him, was probably a disadvantage. It produced in him the habit of feeling that what had been would continue to be, and he was therefore quite unprepared for the coming revolution. At first he took only a personal interest in Luther's affairs; he thought Brother Martin a fine genius; and as to the controversy about indulgences, it was only a squabble among monks.[2]

[1] Walch, 15: 427. The letter is dated February 3, 1518.

[2] The words attributed to Leo X when he first heard of the controversy are: *Che fra Martino aveva un bellesimo ingenio, e che coteste erano invidie fratesche.*

But after a while the case seemed to grow in importance, and he thought that it ought to receive attention. Accordingly, on May 5, he instructed Cardinal Thomas de Vio, usually called Cajetan, whom he sent as a legate to Germany, to take steps toward silencing Luther, or at least toward prejudicing the princes against him. On April 3, Cardinal Raphael di Rovere had written to the Elector of Saxony, commanding him not to protect Luther's person or his books. As the dangers were arising, Luther was thinking of putting himself under the Pope's protection. Even while he was writing his "Asterisks," he had in mind a detailed explanation of his theses; and having written this, he sent it, together with a letter dated May 30, 1518, to his friend Staupitz, requesting him to convey it, in the most convenient way, to the Pope.[1]

This letter to Staupitz is manly and generous. The first part recalled his obligations to the writings of his friend, and describes how it was that he came to understand and to love the true doctrine of repentance; and how, when he had learned it, the preachers of indulgences came and filled him with indignation by teaching their falsehoods; how at last he determined to call their teachings in question; and how, when they could not answer him, they pretended that he was weakening the authority of the Pope. This, he said, was why he, a diffident man, a lover of quiet, had ventured to come before the public. He wished the Pope to understand his cause, and, therefore, he had sent his book, that it might be a sort of advocate for him against the attacks of his enemies. But he did not wish his friend to be involved in his dangers, that he would bear alone. His conclusion is tinged with sadness, but shows no lack of courage; it seems to come from one who felt that the way before him was dark, and that he walked by faith, not by sight. He says: "To those threatening friends of mine I have no answer except the saying of Reuchlin, 'He who is poor fears nothing, has nothing to lose.' I neither have nor desire riches. My fame and honor, if I have them, my enemies are busy destroying. One thing is left: my poor, weak body, weary with trouble. If by force or treachery they should take that from me, they would only make me poorer by an hour or two of life. My sweet Redeemer and Propitiator, the Lord Jesus Christ, is enough for me: to him will I sing as long as I live."

With the letter to Staupitz was also sent a letter to the Pope, whom he addressed humbly, but with dignity and candor. "I have heard, most

Luther, however, in his Table Talk gives a somewhat different version that had come to his ear: "A drunken Dutchman wrote them [the theses]; when he has slept out his sleep, and is sober again, he will then be of another mind."

[1] The title is: *Resolutiones Disputationum de Indulgentiarum virtute, R. P. ac sacrae theologiae doctoris Martini Lutheri Augustaniani Vuittembergensis. Ad Leonem decimem Pontif. omnibus modis summum. Candidum et liberum lectorem opto.* LOL, 2: 137.

blessed Father," so he begins, "that you have heard a very bad report of me, by which, as I learn, certain friends of mine have made my name grievously to stink with you and those about you, as if I were seeking to demolish the authority and power of the keys and of the chief Pontiff. That I am hence accused of being a heretic, an apostate, a perfidious person, yea, called a thousand names, or rather nicknames. Ears are horrified, eyes are stopped! But I have this source of confidence, an innocent and quiet conscience." He then goes over somewhat the same ground as in his letter to Staupitz, except that he gives more in detail a history of his experience with the sellers of indulgences. Among us, he says, in these last days that jubilee of apostolical indulgences began to be preached and went on to such an extent that the preachers of it, thinking that everything was lawful to them under the terror of your name, dared to teach openly the most impious and heretical things, to the gravest scandal and derision of the ecclesiastical power, as if the decretals against the abuse of indulgences were of no concern to them. He was greatly stirred. "I verily burned," he said, "as with zeal for Christ, as it seemed to me, or if any prefer it, with youthful fire; and yet I did not see that it was my business to do anything. At last I privately appealed to some of the great ones of the Church. I was received by some in one way, by some in another, to some I seemed ridiculous, to some something else; the terror of your name, the threats of your censures, was overpowering." When no one else would do anything, and when he could do nothing else, he proposed a disputation. This was the offense that he had committed. Contrary to his expectations his theses had gone out into all the world. Neither his own nor anyone else's had ever had such a circulation. But what could he do? He could not recall them; and they had brought him into a dangerous notoriety. He appealed to the Pope for countenance and protection. He assured him that he simply could not be so bad as he had been represented, otherwise he would not have the friendship of the Elector and other good men. He closes by saying: "Myself and all I have and am, I cast at your feet. Make alive, kill, call, recall, approve, disapprove, as pleases you. I will recognize your voice as the voice of Christ presiding and speaking in you. If I have merited death, I will not refuse to die, for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, who is blessed forever, Amen. May he preserve you eternally."

The book sent with this letter is one of the most important of Luther's early writings. It is a very reasonable, earnest apology, in the older sense of that word. It occupies about one hundred and fifty pages in his printed works. Taking up the theses one by one, sometimes with a few sentences of comment, sometimes with an elaborate argument, it

explains and defends them. On the whole it is written in good temper, only now and then breaking into a strain of indignation. It is introduced by a protestation that the author wishes to say nothing and to hold nothing except what is taught in the Holy Scriptures, in the Fathers recognized by the Roman Church, and in the canons and papal decretals. In the discussion he submits to the judgment of his superiors. And yet, in defense of Christian liberty, he claims the right to challenge the opinions of Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, or any other scholastics or canonists. Large use has already been made of this book; it is not necessary, therefore, to do more now than say that it gives a full and satisfactory view of what Luther taught in the beginning of the controversy, and, incidentally, also what his opponents taught. It shows, too, that they were not far wrong in taking the theses as something more than simple questions for debate. His heart was in them.

He sent his Explanations to the Pope with a serious purpose.[1] He thought they might have some effect, and that somehow he would be safer by having them as an advocate at the Roman court. He knew the Pope as little as the Pope knew him. In this case, and once in awhile through life, he showed great simplicity and unconsciousness of the ways of the world. It does not appear that Leo X took his Explanations into serious consideration, either in a meeting of the Cardinals or in private thought. It is certain that matters moved on, just as if Luther had made no effort to show Leo that the latter was nothing like so important a character as he took himself to be, and that a wise and pious Pope could not possibly do what at that very moment he was vigorously doing.

Luther's opponents were much exasperated; the further the controversy progressed, the more evident it became that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for him to escape a conflict with the Church authorities. Already he was called a heretic; steps had been taken to cite him to Rome; excommunication was threatened. At ordinary times the case of one man, however great, might be of little significance. But men's minds were then plastic, ready to receive new impressions, and disposed to inquire into the reasons of things. By the slow working of mighty but recognized forces, the grasp on old things had been released; old conceptions had been weakened, old combinations made feeble and ready to fall to pieces. In the general loosening of things, there was an opportunity for the sweeping away of what had become hurtful through having got a wrong meaning, or having done its work and lingering beyond its

[1] Near the close of his life Luther said of this time: "In those things I verily thought that I would have the Pope as my patron; I was strongly relying on him." LOL, 1: 16.

day. There was also opportunity for bringing in new thought and making new adjustments. Luther, more than any other man, partly by his character and partly by his circumstances, was prepared to take advantage of the opportunity offered. He was so situated that in acting for himself, he was acting for his times.

He was threatened with excommunication. How ought such a threat to affect him? How ought it to affect the world? What is excommunication? This was a pressing question, and he answered it for himself and for the people in a sermon that he preached in Wittenberg in July, 1518, and afterwards published. Excommunication, he said, is simply depriving the faithful of communion, and their being outside it. Communion itself is twofold, first inward and spiritual; second, external and corporeal. The spiritual communion is faith, hope and charity. Only God can give, and only God can take away, the internal communion. Ecclesiastical communion, therefore, has reference only to the external sacraments. To be excommunicated is not to be handed over to the devil; it does not deprive one of the goods, or of the common prayers, of the Church. If it is just, the external corresponds with the internal and spiritual, but does not itself interrupt the spiritual communion. That only the man can do by his sin. Excommunication was not intended to destroy internal communion. When justly inflicted, its natural effect was to restore that communion, when unjustly inflicted to increase it. The excommunication of the Church is like the chastisement of a mother, given in love and intended for good; and whether just or unjust is to be patiently borne. It can harm only when it excites to resentment and rebellion. One unjustly excommunicated has the opportunity given him of bearing it in such a way as to win the noblest merit. The fear of dying in excommunication ought not to deter him from doing right. To die in excommunication is not to be lost. To be excommunicated for righteousness' sake will rather bring a brighter crown.[1]

In the sermon on excommunication, Luther was consciously preparing himself and his followers for what might be before him. He wrote to Staupitz, September, 1518, that he had preached it, and that it was very much needed by the people—*vehementer necessarium populo*. If he could not avoid excommunication, he could easily endure it. He need not fear for himself; his friends need not fear for him. What had been one of the most terrible instruments of papal repression had lost its terrors. It was a lion in the way, but a chained lion.

In this same way Luther prepared himself to meet the charge of heresy that was now brought against him. For hundreds of years the Church had taught and men had believed that heresy was the greatest of crimes.

[1] LOL, 2: 306 *seq.*

A heretic was to the Church what a leper was to the old Law, and more: he was not worthy to live. But what was a heretic? The name had been much abused. Luther had many occasions to feel this and to inquire within himself what it was to be a heretic. Shrinking from and hating the name,[1] how far could he go in opposing current beliefs without deserving it? Two things were necessary for him and his cause: first, there must be occasion for making clear his thoughts of heresy to himself, and second of teaching them with emphasis to others. The occasion was furnished for the first by every attack made on him, and for both by his controversy with Hoogstraten.

Hoogstraten, in a published work, had advised the Pope to use fire and sword against Luther, and so rid the world of one of the worst of men. This was said by an inquisitor of heresy; and it was as a heretic that Luther was to be burned. In his reply, he did not attempt to define heresy; it does not admit of an exact definition. The case of Hoogstraten was not a case for argument; he had not himself reasoned or argued. The fool must be answered according to his folly; he must be made ridiculous. It so happened that this was not difficult to do. Hoogstraten had a record; he had been engaged in a controversy with the celebrated Hebrew scholar, Reuchlin, in which he had taken the side of prescription against learning. The wits had laughed at him; the scholars felt contempt for him. Luther made short work of him. "Here," said he, "is Hoogstraten's argument: This is contrary to Scripture; therefore it is heretical. Very good; David's adultery was contrary to Scripture, nay, it was contrary to the Decalogue. Therefore, it was heresy. There is no sin, however slight, that is not contrary to Scripture; therefore, the whole world is nothing but pure heresy. The Church itself is not without sin, is heretical. We are all heretics—except only Hoogstraten, who is not as other men are!"

When we have made a man seem contemptible, we may easily speak contemptuously of him. Luther continues: "Who is a heretic if not you, who, according to your logic, hold premises from which the most heretical conclusion follows, that the whole Church is heretical? Therefore, I say I never saw a more pestilent heretic than Jacob Hoogstraten. Arise, then, O Leo X, most gentle shepherd, and send other hunters of heretics to look after this hunter of heretics!"[2] Hoogstraten was defeated; but more, and far more important, Luther and his friends were put in a position in which they might laugh at and despise a charge of heresy.

No one who understands anything of the power of custom or of long reigning conceptions will think that time has been wasted in indicating

[1] *Haereticus nunquam ero, errare disputando possum*, he wrote to Spalatin August 21, 1518. De Wette, 1: 133.

[2] LOL, 2: 295–297.

the process by which Luther was freeing himself and the people from the domination of the slow developments of the past. He was clearing the way, removing obstacles which remaining he could not advance. No man is so likely to find the truth as he who needs it, and Luther never thought so well about heresy and excommunication as when he was called a heretic and threatened with the censures of the Church. In after years, as the responsible leader of a great party, he saw some things obscurely or not at all, which he saw clearly when he was making his way in opposition to authority and power. He rightly urged patience under unjust excommunication; we shall see how patient he was when he was excommunicated! He thought there ought to be freedom in reference to things not authoritatively defined; nevertheless the charge of heresy might be lightly made, even by Lutherans, after awhile. So much depends on the point of view!

In the history of great movements, it oftens happens that some particular time is marked by the conjunction of many things of importance. Sometimes it is a day, sometimes a month or year, that is so marked. Men seem to be under a lucky or unlucky star. In the early time Luther had a fateful month: it was August, 1518. Not the first thing, but certainly not the least important thing, of that month was the coming of Philip Melanchthon.[1] He was born at Bretten, in Baden, February 16, 1497. His original name was Schwartzerd; it was turned into Greek by Reuchlin. His father, George Schwartzerd, was an armorer, a skillful and honored mechanic, who died when Philip was eleven years old. His mother, Barbara Reuter, was of good family and excellent character, besides being a woman of unusual sense.[2] On the father's side he was related to Reuchlin, and lived for a time in the house of Reuchlin's sister, his grandmother, and thus came under the notice and won the esteem of the great scholar. This was at Pforzheim, where he spent two years (1507-1509) in the Latin school. He went thence to the university of Heidelberg, and in 1511 took his Bachelor's degree. His Master's degree was refused him the next year, on account of his youth. It was given him at Tübingen, where he was an enthusiastic student, in 1514. In April, 1518, the Elector Frederick wrote to Reuchlin asking him to recommend some one to teach Greek in the university of Wittenberg. Reuchlin

[1] The name is variously spelled: Melanchthon (which agrees best with the Greek), Melancthon, and Melanthon—the last being the form adopted by himself in his later years.

[2] Melanchthon's mother is said to have been the author of the popular lines:

Almsgiving beggareth not;
Church-going hindereth not;
To grace the ear delayeth not;
Gain ill-gotten helpeth not;
God's book deceiveth not.

recommended Melanchthon. The 24th of July of that year he wrote to Melanchthon: "Here is a letter from the most pious prince, signed by his own hand, in which he offers you the place and promises to be gracious to you. Wherefore now I address you sincerely in the language of the true promise made to Abraham, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.' So my mind presages, so I hope, Philip, that thou wilt be my reward and solace."[1] Almost immediately Melanchthon set out for Wittenberg, leaving Tübingen with the regrets and good will of all. On the way he stopped at Augsburg, where the Diet was in session, and paid his respects to the Elector and to Spalatin. He met with Bavarians too, who wished him to go to Ingolstadt rather than to Wittenberg. At Nürnberg he made the acquaintance of Pirckheimer, the noted Humanist. At Leipzig he was fêted and toasted, and an effort was made to detain him for the university there. August 25th, early in the morning, he entered Wittenberg. He was so young, so unimpressive in appearance, that the Wittenberg professors thought there was some mistake, and that Reuchlin could not have recommended such a mere boy to the Elector. On the 29th he delivered his first lecture. Two days afterwards Luther wrote to Spalatin: "The fourth day after his coming Melanchthon delivered a most learned and elegant lecture, so much to the delight and admiration of all, that we now no longer wonder why you commend him to us. We have already ceased to think of the weakness of his outward appearance, and rejoice in and admire the force that is in him. If we can keep him, I wish no other teacher of Greek."[2] He already began to fear that the diet at Wittenberg would not agree with the young Grecian, and that some other university would tempt him away with a larger salary. The 2d of September Melanchthon's lecture room was crowded, and all classes from highest to lowest were touched with enthusiasm for Greek. The 14th of December Luther wrote to Reuchlin: "Our Philip Melanchthon is an admirable man; yea, there is hardly any respect in which he does not surpass other men; nevertheless he is on the best and most friendly terms with me."[3] Melanchthon was twenty-one years old; Luther was already famous and fourteen years older. They had been together only a hundred days, and there had begun between them such a friendship as is rarely known among men.

It was on the 7th of August that Luther received notice of his summons to Rome. He had been trusting that his letter to the Pope might ward

[1] CR, 1: 32.
[2] De Wette, 1: 135.
[3] De Wette, 1: 197.

off the threatened blow. He was disappointed: the Pope was about to call him to account. Before the 7th he had been much in the thoughts of several persons in the highest position. Two letters were written about him on one day, the 6th of August. One was by the Emperor Maximilian, the other by the Elector of Saxony. The Emperor's letter was to the Pope. He had heard, he said, a few days before, of Luther's Theses and of his recent sermon on excommunication. The Master of the Sacred Palace, Prierias, had also called his attention to them. They very much displeased him, especially as Luther was not only pertinacious in adhering to his doctrines, but had also gained many friends even among men of influence. But what was to be done about it? The Pope was best qualified to judge what doctrine was injurious, and it was his duty to silence those who wordily contended about idle and sophistical questions. He complained that, in defiance of an old papal law, the religious doctors gave themselves up to scholastic reasonings to the neglect of the old, acknowledged teachers of the Church. Such a course led naturally to this present condition of things, and unless something was done to prevent it, matters would grow worse. He mentioned these things to the Pope that he might take steps to prevent scandal to the Church by rash, captious, disputatious men. He himself would take care that whatever the Pope should decree should be done in the Empire. The letter interprets itself. He who wrote it was now old and drawing to the close of his long reign.[1]

The Elector's letter was to the Cardinal Raphael Rovere. It was in answer to one that the Cardinal had written him several months before, about Luther, to whom he suspected the Elector of being too favorable. Frederick assures the Cardinal of his unalterable devotion to the Catholic Church. He had never, even to that day, undertaken to defend Luther's writings or sermons, as he had already shown the papal legate, both by letter and personally. But, as he learns, Dr. Martin had never refused, if his safety were guaranteed, to appear before just, wise and impartial judges and defend his doctrine; and if he should be taught better out of the Holy Scriptures, he would obediently submit. Besides, the Archbishop of Trier had already been spoken to about him, and Luther, no doubt, if his safety were sufficiently assured, would obediently answer the Archbishop's summons. It would grieve the Elector from his soul, if errors in the Catholic faith should spring up and exist in his day, and especially if they should be promoted by him. From which impiety, said he, may God preserve me pure.[2]

These letters enable us to understand the attitude of their writers

[1] LOL, 2: 349 *seq.*

[2] LOL, 2: 351, 352. Rovere's letter was written at Rome April 3, reached the Elector July 7, and was answered from Augsburg, August 5.

toward the movement then going on. The Emperor attributed the rise of the error to the unfaithfulness of the Church teachers, and especially to the indulgence in dialectic quibbles. He implied that the Pope himself was not free from blame, in that he had neglected the enforcement of law, and had not exercised his right to prevent useless and even hurtful controversies. The Elector was peculiarly situated. He knew Luther, admired his genius and force of character, and believed in his sincerity, honesty and piety. It is hard to feel that a man whom we know and admire is a heretic. Besides, the Elector was proud of his new university, and Luther was his most brilliant professor. He was evidently not in much danger from either Emperor or Elector.

There were two other noteworthy letters written in August, 1518, both on the 23d of the month and both by the Pope. One was to the Elector. The Pope began by reminding him of his ancestors' piety and attachment to the papal see, and suggested that he ought to keep up the family reputation. That reputation was in danger: a certain son of iniquity, Brother Martin Luther, was boasting that he had the Elector's protection and that he therefore feared no reproof. The Pope knew that this was false, and yet he thought it proper to warn the Elector. He should not only be free from guilt, but free also from suspicion. This was said by way of introduction. He went on to say that he had heard from many learned and religious men, especially from "our Master of the Sacred Palace," that the said Martin Luther was asserting and publicly affirming certain impious and heretical things, and that he had therefore ordered him to be cited to answer, and had commissioned Cardinal Cajetan, his legate, to do what he ought to do. And as it was the business of the Apostolic See to know who thinks rightly and wrongly, he exhorted and commanded the Elector, "for God's honor, and the Pope's honor, and the Elector's honor, to seek and bring it about that the said Martin Luther be delivered up to the power and judgment of the Holy See, as the aforesaid legate should require." He promised that if the Elector thought there was good in Luther, after that fact had been ascertained and he had been found innocent, he would be sent back with all good favor.[1]

Such a letter, written to a great prince, a man held in the highest esteem by the whole of Europe, of sincere piety and venerable for age as well as character, was properly courteous, but one can hardly see in it, with D'Aubigné, mere fawning flattery. It was diplomatic, but it did not lack plainness. The other letter was to Cardinal Cajetan, the papal representative in Germany. It was an official document, to the Pope's own officer, and was sufficiently outspoken. It was the order for Luther's

[1] LOL, 2: 352 *seq.*

arrest. It began by reciting his offense: He had dared to teach things contrary to what was held by the Roman Church, and also, in his rashness, without having consulted that Church, the mistress of faith, to publish in various parts of Germany certain Theses and also infamous little books. Wishing paternally to restrain his rashness, the Pope had commissioned Jerome, Episcopus Asculanus, to inquire into his belief and admonish him. This had been done (the 7th of August) and Luther had abused the papal kindness and published more books containing more heresy, thereby disturbing the Pope's mind no little. He would forbear no longer, but lest the disease should grow worse, he commanded the legate to have Luther brought before him as a declared heretic; and when he had him in his power he was to keep him safe until he should receive the Pope's command for him to stand in the presence of the Apostolic See. This was to be done with the aid of the Emperor, the courts, the universities, and so on to the end of the list. If Luther should voluntarily deliver himself up, ask pardon, and show signs of repentance, the Cardinal might benignly receive him to the unity of the holy mother Church, which never closes her heart against the returning penitent. But if he should remain perverse, and should not surrender himself, he and his followers were to be publicly declared heretics, anathematized, and Christians were to be required to avoid them under penalty of excommunication. All persons, secular and ecclesiastical, of every order (the Emperor Maximilian excepted) were required to take the said Martin Luther and his followers and deliver them into the Cardinal's hands. If the princes or others should favor Luther, publicly or privately, or in any way receive him or give him aid, their cities, towns, lands were to be placed under interdict as long as he remained in them, and three days afterwards. Besides, there was to be exclusion from office and other civil and political disabilities, and refusal of Christian burial to those who should be disobedient; rewards and favors to those who should assist in carrying out the Pope's will.[1]

Affairs in Germany, and particularly the above-summarized letters of the Emperor and Elector, probably stimulated the Pope to take such vigorous measures with Luther. The fire so recently kindled was already spreading with alarming rapidity. The meeting of the Diet at which Cajetan was present, the conference between the Emperor and the Elector of Saxony (which resulted in both writing the same day) the discussions of public matters among the princes, had helped to disclose the situation.

[1] LOL, 2: 354. Though this letter, of which nothing is known beyond its publication by Luther in his *Acta Augustana*, is accepted by Pallavicini as genuine (in his "History of the Council of Trent"), Ranke has shown that there are insuperable difficulties in the way of accepting its genuineness. Kolde, however, defends the authenticity of the letter.

The principal business of the Diet was to confer about a Turkish war; but it was felt that the relations of the Pope to Germany also required consideration. It was even suggested that the Turk was to be looked for in Italy, rather than in Hungary or the East. The Germans were moved to think of and formulate their grievances against the papal court. There was a double revelation of disaffection and hostility towards Rome and of possible sympathy and favor for Luther. The declared heretic was also getting a better understanding of things. It began to be suggested to him that he was not so entirely alone as he had thought himself to be.

Of course the Pope's letters of August 23d were not seen in Wittenberg in that month. It was some time before the letter to Cajetan was known to Luther and his friends. But the admonition of the 7th caused much anxiety. The anxiety was probably increased by the apparently inopportune publication of the reply to Prierias, and the Explanations of the Theses a few days after the coming of the summons. That publication was certain to be construed as an additional offense. The Pope would not stop to think that the printing must have been ordered long before, and he would suspect Luther of contempt and defiance. This is what Luther's friends would fear; and it is what the Pope actually did.[1]

The crowding together of so many things in one month indicated the coming of a crisis. The battle was ordering itself. The coming of Melanchthon, the letter of the Emperor, the letter of the Elector, the summons to Rome, the Diet at Augsburg, the conference between Emperor and Elector, the presence of the papal legate, the Pope's two letters, the publication of Luther's important little books, all contributed to the general effect. Luther himself, and his friends with him, felt that he was being pressed to the wall. Staupitz wrote him on September 14th: "I do not see that anything except the cross awaits you. Unless I am mistaken, there is a notion abroad that without the Pope's permission, no one should search the Scripture to find out what Christ would have him do. I wish that you would leave Wittenberg for a time and come to me, that we may live and die together."[2] This was written from Salzburg, whither Staupitz had gone to be head of a monastery. On August 8th, the next day after receiving the summons, Luther wrote to the Elector, asking his intercession and help.

The university acted later (September 25th) writing two letters in his behalf, one to Miltitz, the papal nuncio, the other to the Pope him-

[1] It was probably these books that the Pope alluded to in his letter of the 23d, when he said, "It has recently come to our knowledge, moreover, that the said Martin, having abused and been emboldened by our kindness, adding to his offenses and persisting in his heresy, has published certain other propositions," etc.

[2] Walch, 15: 2412.

self. The one to Miltitz was to beg that he, a German, would intercede for a German in distress. The Pope had spoken of Luther as a son of perdition; his neighbors, those who knew him best, thought very differently of him. They called him the most distinguished member of the university. They had known him many years, and had found him to be not only a man of varied and distinguished learning, but also of the purest morals. As he appeared to the university, so he appeared to the Elector; neither he nor they would harbor or protect a heretic.[1] What they asked was that Miltitz would bring it about that his cause might be committed to impartial judges in Germany, and heard in some safe place. They did not doubt that Miltitz, whose power and influence were great at Rome, would be able to obtain for them what they asked.

The letter to the Pope was somewhat shorter. It was written at Luther's request; he wished them to testify as to his doctrine and reputation, which, as he claimed, certain persons had unjustly defamed. The letter urged his bodily weakness and the dangers of the way as a reason why he should not be required to go to Rome.[2] His principal offense was that he had somewhat too freely used the right of disputation, and had disputed (not asserted) certain things too vigorously for his adversaries. Both letters are abundantly submissive and respectful to the Pope.[3] They were written too late, however, to have any influence on the Pope's conduct. The Elector had already acted in the case, and it had been decided. The Pope himself no doubt saw that Luther's arrest and delivery at Rome might be attended with difficulties. There were reasons why he should be willing to gratify the wishes of the Elector of Saxony, whose help he might need at no distant day. Possibly he was not yet certain that extreme measures would be necessary. At all events, he found it convenient, in a modified way at least, to suspend the order for Luther's arrest. Instead, he was to be heard in Germany by Cajetan. His friends would have preferred a German judge, but it was something that he was not compelled to go to Rome.

The meeting with Cajetan was highly important. The case was developing, but it had not yet fully developed. Luther was still a loyal son of the Church. He could say, "I protest that I reverence and follow

[1] So favorably are we disposed to the Christian religion, the holy apostolic see and the Holy Roman Church, that, if it was clear to us that Doctor Martin had lapsed into foul and impious errors, we ourselves would be the first not only to give him up to the laws, but ourselves to execute them and to cast him out—so far are we from wishing to favor anyone who errs from the way of evangelical truth.—Letter to Miltitz, LOL, 2: 361.

[2] The plea of bodily weakness is not so unreasonable when we remember that Luther had traveled on foot to Rome in 1510; and that he now thought of going in no other way. He broke down on the shorter journey to Augsburg.

[3] They say to the Pope: "We are prepared in all things to obey your will and that of the Holy Catholic Church in Christ Jesus our Lord God." They sign themselves the "Rector, Masters and Doctors of the Wittenberg Academy." LOL, 2: 363, 364.

the Holy Roman Church in all my words and deeds, whether present, past or future. And if I have said, or shall hereafter say, anything contrary to or different from that Church, I wish to hold it and to have it held not said." This he actually did say to Cajetan. The question about the Pope had, indeed, been raised, but he cared little for it. His chief interest was still in the question as to the nature and office of faith. If he could have been tolerated in his views of faith, if the issue could have been kept from changing or widening, all might have been healed. The meeting with the papal legate might close or widen the breach. It took place at Augsburg, a city famous in the history of the Reformation. Luther traveled on foot. On September 28th he reached Weimar, where he met the Elector and preached. At Nürnberg he met his friend Wencel Link, from whom he borrowed a monk's frock, in which to appear before the Cardinal. Thence he went accompanied by Link and a former pupil. When within about fifteen miles of Augsburg he was taken sick and had to travel the rest of the way in a wagon.[1] All his circumstances were in striking contrast with the importance of his mission. In great moral and religious struggles, how little really depends on the accidents of a man! How greatly a great man towers above his accidents!

Luther reached Augsburg October 7th, and went at once to the Augustinian convent. There the friends to whom the Elector had given him letters promptly called on him. He had come trusting in the assurances of safety that Cajetan had given the Elector, and that the Elector had given him. He expected to appear without delay before the Cardinal, and so informed the messenger of that official. His friends, more prudent, warned him not to put himself in the legate's power without the protection of a safe-conduct from the Emperor. The messenger insisted that such a safe-conduct was unnecessary, and the Cardinal regarded the suspicion that it might be needed as a reflection on his honor; but, on the whole, Luther concluded to follow the advice of his friends and accordingly he waited for the safe-conduct. In the meantime he removed to the convent of the Carmelites, at the invitation of John Trosch, the prior, an old friend. Here he had two or three days in which to rest and think of what was before him. He had reached the city Friday; he was on the streets Sunday and many were curious to see and hear him. He says, "All wished to see the Herostratus who had kindled so great a fire." This he said in a letter to Melanchthon, whom he exhorted to

[1] In recalling his journey to Augsburg, in 1545, he wrote: "*Veni igitur pedester et pauper Augustam, stipatus sumptibus et literis Principis Frederici ad senatum et quosdam bonos viros comendatitiis.* Pref. to LOL, 1: 17. Among the good men to whom Luther was commended were the imperial Councillor Peutinger, Langemantel, the brothers Adelman and others. Staupitz was also in Augsburg.

continue to teach the young men as he had been doing. For himself, he said, he would rather perish, and what was more, give up his delightful fellowship with Melanchthon forever, than revoke what he had well said. He thought Italy full of palpable darkness; that the Italians were ignorant of Christ and Christ's doctrines; and it was bitter to him that they should be the lords of his faith. God in wrath, he said, had given them children for rulers.[1] It had not yet been sixty days since the young Melanchthon began to teach in Wittenberg, and in a strange city, surrounded by watchful enemies, Luther turned to him.

The safe-conduct reached Luther October 10th, and the next day, Tuesday, he appeared before Cajetan. As he had never before had audience of a great papal official, it was needful to instruct him how to conduct himself. Following his instructions, he prostrated himself, then on being commanded to rise, he remained on his knees until a second order, when he stood up. The Cardinal received him graciously and respectfully.[2] He did not, he said, wish to dispute with Luther, but in a kind and fatherly way to settle the whole matter. In order to this he proposed, according to the instructions of the Pope, that Luther should do three things: first, return to himself and revoke his errors; second, promise to abstain from them in the future; and third, to do nothing thereafter to disturb the peace of the Church. Luther in reply begged to be taught wherein he had erred. This seemed so reasonable that the Cardinal, who did not wish to dispute, came near being betrayed into disputing. He mentioned two things in Luther's teachings that were objectionable. The first was thesis 58: That the merits of Christ are not the Treasure of indulgences. This was in conflict with the *Extravagans* of Clement VI, the *Unigenitus*, etc. The second objectionable thing was that he who approaches the sacraments or enters into judgment must have faith. This, the Cardinal thought, was a new and erroneous doctrine, inasmuch as every man would be uncertain whether in the sacraments he would receive grace or not. He seems to have thought that Luther was ignorant of the *Extravagans* of Clement, and that an authority that satisfied him would also satisfy Luther But Luther replied that he was acquainted with the law referred to, and others of a similar charac-

[1] The letter to Melanchthon is short, LOL, 2: 364; De Wette, 1:145. It is dated *Augustae feria secunda post Dionysii anno M. D. xviii.* Roscoe ("Life of Leo X," Bohn ed.) says queerly that this letter was written "on the eve of Luther's departure on this expedition, so hazardous to himself," that is, by implication, at Wittenberg. Luther wrote: *Omnes cupiunt videre hominem tanti incendii Herostratum.* Roscoe translated: "Every one wishes to see the man who is to be the victim of such a conflagration." 2: 98.

[2] Luther said: "I was received by the most reverend Lord Cardinal legate sufficiently kindly, almost too reverently, for he was altogether different from the tribe of robustious hunters of the brethren." LOL, 2: 369. This is from the first report that Luther gave of the interview. Afterwards, when he found that the Cardinal was against him, he spoke differently.

ter, and had duly considered them. He did not regard them as sufficient authority, for many reasons, but chiefly because they did violence to the teachings of the Scriptures, which he followed and preferred. This led the Cardinal to claim that the Pope is above a council, above the Scriptures, supreme in the Church. Luther denied this, and the issue was fairly joined. Then followed a long, confused and unsatisfactory wrangle, in which many questions were raised and none settled. At length the Cardinal was weary of the talk and it closed, Luther asking time for deliberation.[1]

The next day Luther was again before the Cardinal. This time he brought with him a written protestation, in which he claimed to be faithful to the Pope, but at the same time declined to renounce his teaching, or to make the promise that the Cardinal had required. He could not, unheard and unrefuted, be compelled to make a recantation. "I am not to this day," he said, "conscious of having said anything contrary to the sacred Scripture, the Church Fathers, the decretals of the Popes, or right reason." On the other hand, all his teachings appeared to him sound, true and Catholic. Nevertheless, he was a man, capable of error, and he submitted himself to the legitimate judgment and decision of the Church, and of those who were able to instruct him. He offered to give a reason for his teachings, publicly and orally, or in writing, and to submit to the judgment of several universities, including the university of Paris, which was then especially distinguished. The Cardinal substantially repeated what he had said the day before; and the meeting closed with little advance made, except that Luther had gained permission to present in writing a discussion of the two propositions to which the Cardinal had objected.[2]

On the following day, October 13th, Luther appeared before the legate for the third and last time, bringing with him a long, closely argued paper. His first object was to show why he was not willing to take the *Extravagans* of Clement VI as final authority. He had several reasons for not doing so. First, it contradicted the unanimous opinion of the Church; second, it wrested the Scriptures, referring to indulgences what had been said of sanctifying grace; third, the simple fact that it was a papal decretal gave it no binding authority, for such decretals have sometimes been false, contrary to Scripture and to charity; and the law did not require them to

[1] *Petii, ut tempus daret deliberandi.* LOL, 2: 37. The account following of Luther's appearance before Cajetan is based on the *Acta D. Martini Lutheri Augusta.* LOL, 2: 365–392. Cf. Dieckhoff, *Der Ablassstreit*, p. 201 *seq.*

[2] When Luther came on the second day with the vicar-general of the Congregation of Observantes, and began in the presence of a notary to make his protestation after the manner of disputants, the Cardinal smiled; and afterwards Luther spoke of their having sufficiently disputed orally, and wished to present his case in writing, Cajetan at once replied, "My son, I have never disputed with you, and I do not wish to dispute." Luther to the Elector. LOL, 2: 407.

be held true, except when they agreed with Scripture and did not disagree with former decrees of the Fathers.[1] The Pope could not have higher authority than Peter, and Peter had erred and been reproved, and at Jerusalem his teaching was not accepted until it was supported by the approbation of James and the consent of the whole Church. Moreover, he said, how many earlier decretals have been contradicted by later. And authorities show that not only a general council, but any Christian, is above a Pope if he contends with better authority and arguments. For these reasons he could not abandon what he had learned from the Scriptures, simply because a single obscure papal decretal was opposed to him. The words of Scripture, he said, which teach that even the saints fall short in merits, are infinitely to be preferred to the words of a Pope which say that the saints do good works in excess.

But, after all, he cared little about the question of the Pope's infallibility, or whether he should be considered above a council. It was not a thing of vital importance. It was the second question that vitally interested him. A man might be a good Christian, whatever he should think of the *Extravagans* of Clement, but he was nothing but a heretic if he did not have faith in the word of Christ. That faith is necessary he proved in many ways, chiefly by quotations from the Scriptures which show the power of faith. He closed the long array of proofs by bringing in the testimony, first of Augustine, and then that of Ambrose. "These and many other authorities," he said, "compel me to the opinion that I have expressed. Wherefore I humbly beg that you will deal gently with me, have pity on my conscience, and show me the light by means of which I may have a different understanding; and do not compel me to a revocation of those things that in my conscience I do not think to be other than they are. While my authorities hold, I know nothing else that I can do except obey God rather than man." He begged the Cardinal's intercession with the Pope, that a soul seeking only the truth and fully prepared as soon as it was better instructed, might not be cast into outer darkness. He was not so arrogant and desirous of vainglory as to be ashamed to recall what he had erroneously spoken. He wished first of all that the truth should prevail; but he did not wish to be forced against his conscience, and he had no doubt that what he had taught was according to the Scriptures.

On the whole it was an awkward meeting. Neither party was in natural relations to the other. It was in one sense a trial, in another a simple colloquy. In one sense Cajetan was Luther's judge, in another

[1] Although we ought to hear the Pope's decretals as the voice of Peter . . . yet it is understood only of those *quae consonae sunt sacrae scripturae et a prioribus patrum decretis non dissentunt.* LOL, 2: 373.

a fatherly adviser.[1] Luther was both a declared heretic and a disputant having a right to show his opinion. This anomalous state of things showed itself in the conduct of the principal actors. As the representative of the Pope, the Cardinal required a revocation; as a paternal adviser he proposed objections and offered explanations. Luther, while recognizing that he was on trial, nevertheless used the tone and manner of disputation. He afterwards complained that the Cardinal required him to revoke. The Cardinal complained that Luther insisted on disputing. He was kind and conciliatory in manner; he was not vexed, but rather amused, at Luther's mistaking him for a party to a theological controversy. Luther evidently surprised the Cardinal's party by his knowledge and readiness. He was earnest, candid, forcible, but perfectly respectful. He acted, as he said, with much reverence, for "even true things ought to be asserted and defended with humility."

As might have been expected, Luther's paper produced no impression on Cajetan. He promised to send it to Rome, but still insisted that Luther should revoke, and if he was unwilling to do so he might consider the matter ended and expect to be called no more before him. In fact Luther saw him no more. The Cardinal sought to accomplish through Luther's friends, especially Staupitz, what he had been unable to accomplish in person, but in that too he failed. Luther waited some days in Augsburg, and wrote two letters to the Cardinal, without gaining a response.[2] The Cardinal's silence, and the report that he and Staupitz were to be arrested and imprisoned, made Luther uneasy He thought that he had done enough to show his obedience to the Elector and the Pope, and that he might at last consult his own safety. One thing more, however, he did. He wrote and posted an appeal from Cajetan to the Pope,[3] and then, in the night, by an unfrequented gate, he left the city mounted on a hard-trotting horse, and at a speed too great for his comfort, started back to Wittenberg. He had reached Augsburg on October 7th, appeared before the Cardinal on the 11th, left the city on the 20th, and reached Wittenberg the 31st, the anniversay of Thesis day.

The meeting at Augsburg influenced all the parties connected with the controversy, and affected the conduct of the Elector, the Pope and Luther. It made the Elector more distinctly and positively Luther's friend. Cajetan wrote him that he had become convinced that Luther was a dangerous man, likely to cause trouble, and that as such he ought to be promptly condemned. It was true that Luther had asserted certain things in his Theses tentatively and for disputation, but it was also true that he had

[1] *Ostendi monuique paterne, disputationes et sermones ejus esse contra apostolicam doctrinam.* Cajetan to Elector Frederick. LOL, 2: 406.
[2] LOL, 2: 393 *seq.*; De Wette, 1: 162 *seq.*
[3] LOL, 2: 397 *seq.*

taught some things positively and affirmatively. Some of these things were against the teachings of the Apostolic See, and some were damnable. He called upon the Elector, as he valued his conscience and his honor, to send Luther to Rome, or at least to expel him from his dominions. So far as he, the legate was concerned, he had washed his hands of the business, and referred it to Rome, where it would be attended to. In a final paragraph, or postscript, he exhorted the Elector not to believe those who said that Luther's teachings were harmless; and not to stain his own and his ancestors' glory for the sake of one little monk.[1]

The Elector promptly handed the Cardinal's letter to Luther, with the request that he, too, should make a report of what happened at Augsburg. He also wrote to the Cardinal himself. He had promised Cajetan, he said, that Luther should personally appear before him at Augsburg, and he had fulfilled his promise. He had persuaded himself that the Cardinal would also act according to his promise, and after having heard Martin dismiss him in a kind and fatherly way; that he would not compel him to revoke without having heard and discussed his case, as Martin reported that he had done. Besides, there were many learned men in the universities and elsewhere who could never be induced to say that Luther's doctrines were unchristian and heretical. Some who had condemned him had done so because his teachings interfered with their present gains. If he had any reason for thinking Luther a heretic, he would not need any exhortation or admonition to prompt him to do what he ought. He was surprised that the Cardinal had attempted to influence him to send Luther to Rome, or to expel him from his territories, by the threat that the Roman Curia would now take charge of the case. Luther had never been convicted of heresy. He enclosed with his own letter Luther's account of the Augsburg meeting. The Elector's letter is dated December 8, 1518.[2]

The Cardinal's report to Rome, and particularly Luther's appeal, made it necessary for the Pope to speak. He did speak, in a Brief to Cardinal Cajetan, the avowed purpose of which was to remove all excuse for those who alleged ignorance as an apology for opposing the teachings of the Apostolic See. The Brief,[3] slightly abridged, runs as follows:

[1] *Propter unum Fraterculum.* LOL, 2: 409. The Cardinal is very earnest. He says, in a postscript, *Iterum atque iterum rogo, ut Dominatio vestra illustrissima non permittat se decipi a dicentibus*, etc. Cajetan is reported as saying of Luther, "I do not wish to talk any more with this beast. For he has deep eyes and wonderful speculations in his head." Schaff, 6: 174.

[2] All the early attempts of the Roman Church to deal with Luther were simply attempts to crush him, without trial or hearing; his case was prejudged from the beginning, and the Curia would listen to no defense. He had questioned the papal power, and he was to be shown what the papal power could do to him. All these plans were brought to naught by the Elector's firm letter.

[3] For this document see LOL, 2: 428 *seq.*, and Löscher, 2: 494 *seq.* The latter calls it a bull or decretal, and in this he is followed by most historians. But this

Since, after your circumspection arrived in Germany, it came to our ears that certain of the religious, even some appointed for the preaching of the word of God, by publicly preaching concerning indulgences—hitherto from time immemorial customarily granted by us and the Roman pontiffs, our predecessors—have imprinted errors on the hearts of many. . . . We enjoin that by our authority you approve what things are deserving of praise, but that you be careful to reprobate and condemn those things that have been less well said, even by those who profess themselves willing to follow the doctrine of the Roman Church. And, lest anyone should hereafter protess ignorance of the teaching of the Roman Church about such indulgences and their efficacy, or excuse himself on pretext of such ignorance, or aid himself by counterfeit protestations, but that the guilty may be convicted of notorious lying, and may be justly condemned, we proceed to show thee by these presents what the Roman Church (which the rest are bound to follow as a mother) has handed down. The Roman Pontiff, successor of Peter the key-bearer, and vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, by the power of the keys (which he is to show by lifting the burdens on the faithful of Christ, viz. the guilt and penalty due for actual sins, the guilt indeed by the mediating sacrament of penance, but the temporal penalty due according to divine justice for actual sins by the mediation of ecclesiastical indulgence) is able to grant for reasonable causes to the faithful of Christ, who in the judgment of charity are members of Christ, whether they are in this life or in purgatory, indulgences out of the superabundance of merits of Christ and the saints, and as well for the living as for the dead, granting indulgence by his Apostolic authority, can dispense the Treasure of merits of Christ and the Saints, can confer this indulgence by means of absolution or can transfer it by means of intercessory prayer (*per modum suffragii*). And for that reason, all, as well living as dead, who have in good faith (*veraciter*) obtained all indulgences of this kind, are freed from all temporal penalty due according to the divine justice for their actual sins, as much as equals the indulgence given and obtained. And so, we decree by Apostolic authority, it must be held and preached by all, under pain of the greater excommunication, from which those incurring it shall be absolved by no one save the Roman Pontiff, unless in the article of death.

Though the language of this Brief is involved and turgid beyond the average of even papal documents, there can be little doubt as to the

appears to be an error. A bull has certain peculiar and invariable criteria, chief in importance among which is that the document shall be addressed to the whole Church. But the above is a private document, a commission addressed to Cajetan, bearing date Nov. 9, 1518. It therefore does not, in any case, whatever we call it, come under the definition of infallibility: "When the Roman Pontiff speaks ex cathedra—that is, when he, using his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his Apostolic office defines a doctrine of faith and morals, to be held by the whole Church," his decisions are infallible "by the divine assistance promised him in blessed Peter." (Schaff, "Creeds," 2: 270.) It is not correct, therefore, to say with Köstlin, that in this document the Pope lays down the doctrine of indulgences, except as his own opinion in a private communication; nor may we say with Kurtz and Lea that he "defines" the doctrine; but Fisher is correct when he says that the Pope "asserts" the doctrine of indulgences. (Köstlin, 124, Lea, "Indulgences," 3: 77, Fisher, "Reformation," 97.)

Pope's meaning. Luther had contended that there is no Treasure of merit, which could be relied upon as a source of indulgences; the Pope asserted that there is such a Treasure and that he dispensed it. Luther had contended that the Pope could only remit the penalty that he had imposed or that had been imposed according to the canons of the Church; the Pope claimed that he could remit the penalty for actual sins, due to divine justice. Luther had urged that indulgences avail only for the living; the Pope declares that they are equally efficacious for living and dead. Luther had denied that the Pope has power to make new laws; the Pope assumes the right to make a new law, and to declare what was to be believed about indulgences. In short, everything that Luther had condemned in his contest with the indulgence-mongers was owned and asserted by the Pope. Tetzel, Prierias, Hoogstraten, Eck, and all the rest, retired into the background, and Luther stood in the arena face to face with Leo X, who had thrust his advocates aside, and stood forth in his own behalf. Would Luther dare to attack him?

He had seen at Augsburg that he had reached a point where he must abandon all or attempt more. His appeal from Cajetan to the Pope was a last resort. If that should fail, what then? He expected it to fail. At most he had only the faintest hope that it would not fail, and yet it was well that he wrote it. It put him in the strongest possible position of defense. No one would be able to misunderstand him: he was not a rebel against rightful authority; he would give the Pope all rightful honor. If it should come to the worst, and the Pope should condemn him, all the world would know exactly why it was that he was condemned, and many would feel that the Pope was in the wrong. He acted with remarkable wisdom as well as courage. Possibly a sense of danger made him prudent and unwilling to neglect anything that might be necessary to safety; or it may be, a traditional reverence for the Pope, rudely shaken but not yet destroyed, held him back; or, it may be, he was restrained and made cautious by the influence of the Elector, a wise, just, brave man, who communicated his own moderation and sense of justice to those about him. All three of these causes may have been at work, but we may perhaps give most weight to the last. At this stage of his life and work, it was of great importance to him that he was associated with a good and great man, still a devout Catholic, of whom he stood in filial awe.

On his way back from Augsburg he saw for the first time the Pope's letter of the 2d of August, ordering his arrest. Soon after he saw Cajetan's letter to the Elector, stating that he had turned his case over to the Pope and advising the Elector to give him up. This meant that the plan of an investigation in Germany was abandoned. Luther no longer

doubted what the Pope would do; and he did not long hesitate what he should do. In the first place, he wrote an account of his interview with Cajetan, and published it, together with the Pope's brief and a note thereon, against the advice, and even command, of the Elector. Now for the first time he spoke bitterly of the Pope. In a letter to Spalatin he mentions "the apostolical, or rather diabolical Brief."[1] He thought it incredible that so monstrous a thing should have proceeded from any Pope, and especially from Leo X. "Therefore," he says, "whoever the fool was who in the Pope's name thought to frighten me with such a decree, let him know that I can see through impostures."[2] In the *Postilla* that he wrote to this papal letter, he mentioned the Pope's statement that he had continued to publish heretical books after he had been warned, and calls it "a palpable lie" (*apertum mendacium*). He mentioned too that he had been cited to Rome on the 7th of August, and required to be there in sixty days, and just sixteen days after the citation (that is, the 23d of August) the order was given to the legate to arrest him. Is it, he asked, the custom of the Roman Curia on the same day to cite, admonish, condemn and declare condemned a man in his absence and in ignorance of what was going on?[3] In all this he put the Pope at a disadvantage.

In one sense the Pope had not misrepresented the case. Some of Luther's books had been actually published after the citation. They were not published, however, by the will and purpose of Luther formed after the Pope had admonished him. They were already in press before the summons came. Yet it is also true that Luther might have suppressed them, had he been so minded. It was one of those cases in which party zeal may see a grave offense where candor will see comparatively little to blame. If the Pope had been anxious to know the truth, he might have known it. On the other hand, if Luther had been disposed to judge charitably, he would not have accused the Pope of falsehood. But there was enough of truth in the accusation to dispose men to feel that Luther was not fairly judged; and this disposition was increased by the Pope's haste to bring Luther before him. He seemed to be influenced by passion and resentment. This aroused the sympathies of generous men, even though they might suspect Luther of being a heretic, and drew his friends closer to him. The head of the Church, he who ought to be the fountain and source of justice, had acted arbitrarily, harshly, unjustly; he who ought to be the friend of the oppressed had himself become an oppressor.

As the Pope had failed in his high office, there was only one recourse.

[1] The letter of August 23, to Cajetan, previously summarized.
[2] Dated October 31. De Wette, 1: 166.
[3] For this Postilla, see LOL, 2: 358.

Only a general council could help, and Luther appealed to a general council.[1] This appeal did not differ in its general form from his appeal to the Pope. It gave a vigorous, plausible statement of Luther's wrongs as they appeared to him. It complained that no account was made of his submission to the Pope, and his readiness to recant as soon as he should be convinced of error; that unheard, with no reasons given, in simple tyranny and in the plenitude of power, the Pope was seeking to force him to give up opinions that he believed to be true. In behalf of the right to learn from the Scriptures, and in opposition to the effort to force him to abandon a true, wholesome Christian faith and accept the vain, lying opinions of men, he appealed from the Pope to a future legitimate council to be held in a safe place.

In making this appeal he was seeking the remedy that the Church, from the earliest times, had provided in just such cases. He was exercising a right that for centuries had been freely exercised. It had been little more than a hundred years since the corruptions of the Papacy had forced the Christian world to assemble in council at Constance, where three contending Popes were deposed and a new Pope was chosen in their stead. But the extreme papal party was now in power; and an appeal to a council had itself been pronounced an act of rebellion and treason.[2] Luther's appeal, therefore, the voice of one man pleading for judgment, would be in vain, unless in some way his case could be felt to be the case of a great party. Multitudes felt it to be so. It had been brought about that he stood for a policy, and that if he should fall privileges of the Church dear to many would fall with him. The contest between him and the Pope was the old contest that had been from the beginning, and ever shall be: the contest for private judgment and individual rights on the one hand and the centralization of power on the other. Henceforth there were two parties in Europe: the party of Luther and the party of the Pope.

[1] LOL, 2: 446 *seq.* This document will be found in Appendix III.

[2] In the constitution *Execrabilis* of Pius II, January 18, 1459, *Mag. Bull*, I: 369; reënacted and enlarged by Julius II, in the bull *Suspecte regiminis*, July 1, 1509, *Mag. Bull*, I: 501.

CHAPTER IV

THE LEIPZIG DISPUTATION

In less than a year after the Theses had been nailed to the church door, Luther's case had passed from the jurisdiction of universities and theologians to that of the Emperor and the papal court. And each step in advance had revealed more clearly the gravity and difficulty of the situation. The Pope had consented to suspend the order for Luther's appearance at Rome, and to permit instead the meeting with Cajetan at Augsburg. This had been done, in great part at least, in deference to the wishes of the Elector of Saxony, who had given unmistakable proofs of his friendship for Luther. As long as the Elector continued to favor him, the Pope might well hestitate to use extreme measures against him—it would be awkward to attempt an arrest of the heretical monk and fail. If only the Elector could be gained, everything else would follow. It was thought worth while to make the attempt.

It was the Pope's custom to give every year to one of the princes of the Church a golden rose, as a mark of his peculiar favor. This year he extended the favor to Elector Frederick, and sent it by the hand of Charles von Miltitz, who was supposed, not without reason, to be *persona grata* at Wittenberg. We have seen how the university there sought his good offices in favor of Luther, begging him as a German to intercede for and help a German who was in trouble. Miltitz received his commission and instruction, and everything supposed to be necessary to his undertaking, on the 4th of October, just four days after Luther's escape from Augsburg. He was to let the Elector know that he had the rose for him, but not to give it to him until he had shown a willingness to accede to the Pope's wishes. The Brief defining the papal view of indulgences was a part of the plan. It had been claimed that Luther, in opposing them, had violated no law and had been guilty of no heresy. The Brief was intended to answer and silence this claim. It took away all excuse from the Elector, and made it necessary for him to acknowledge Luther's heresy, unless indeed, he was willing to deny the finality of the Pope's authority. He was to be enticed by the rose, and impelled by the Brief. Miltitz also took with him letters from the Pope to Pfeffinger, a counsellor of the Elector, and Spalatin, whose influence was known, asking them to persuade the Elector to abandon Luther.[1]

[1] The two letters are in LOL, 2: 446–449. They are very nearly alike. In both the Pope says, "Knowing how great your favor is with the Duke, and how greatly

Miltitz traveled slowly, stopping at one place and another, and had full opportunity to find out the temper of the Germans. His eyes were partially opened. On December 27th he reached Altenburg, and had an interview with Spalatin in his own house. Here his eyes were still further opened. Spalatin made him understand, as he had not before understood, the extreme provocation which Tetzel and his assistants had given Luther. He saw the first thing for him to do was to free himself (and, if possible, the Pope) from any suspicion of sympathy with the extravagance and indecency of the indulgence sellers. Tetzel was at Leipzig. Miltitz at once summoned him to meet him at Altenburg. Tetzel replied excusing himself; he could not leave Leipzig with safety. Martin Luther, the Augustinian, so he wrote, had so stirred up the mighty ones in Germany and elsewhere against him, that he was nowhere safe.[1] Miltitz could easily believe this. It accorded with what he had learned by his own observation, and strengthened impressions that he had received. It was, therefore, with a good understanding of the situation that he met Luther in the first days of January, 1519.

They met in Altenburg. This meeting was important, not so much for what it accomplished, as for what it showed to be still possible. In the last years of his life, twenty-six years after it occurred, Luther described it. After the lapse of so many years it might be easy for him to interpret what occurred in the light of subsequent events; and to think that he understood at the time what in fact he did not understand until afterwards. But it must be said that his reminiscences are unusually trustworthy. From the very first there were sharply defined, prominent incidents, to which he had occasion frequently to recur. He often thought of them and spoke of them, and so kept them fresh in memory. In some cases it happens that his recollected impressions can be compared with letters or other records made at the time; and in such cases his memory is found to be wonderfully faithful. His meeting with Miltitz made a deep impression on him and was no doubt often in his mind. No doubt, too, he often spoke of it among his friends. According to his recollections Miltitz sought to make the most favorable impression possible. He assumed an air of easy confidence and familiarity. "O Martin," he said, "I thought that you were some old theologian, and I see that you

he esteems the wisdom and prudence of your advice, we exhort you in the Lord and paternally require you," etc. What Luther thought of Pfeffinger may be gathered in what he said in a letter to the Elector (1517): "Most gracious lord and prince, inasmuch as you formerly promised me a new garment, I now beg to put you in mind of the same. But I must ask, as I did before, that if Pfeffinger is to fulfil the promise, he do it by deed and not by soft words. He knows well how to spin fine words, but that never makes good cloth." De Wette, 1: 77.

[1] *Wann Martinus Luther, Augustiner, hat die Mächtigen nicht allein schier in allen deutschen Landen, sondern auch in den Königreichen zu Behem, Ungarn, und Polen, also wider mich erregt und bewegt, dass ich nirgent sicher bin.* Löscher, 3: 20.

are yet in the prime of life." He went on to mention proofs of Luther's popularity. He had found three men for Luther where he had found one for the Pope. He gave it as his opinion that he could not take Luther to Rome even if he had twenty-five thousand men. He laughed at the blunders of the women whose opinion he had asked of the Roman See. "The Roman See?" they said, "how can we know what kind of seats you have at Rome, whether they are wood or stone?" They did not understand the double meaning of *Stuhl* (*sedes*), denoting as it did both seat and the See.[1]

In his old age, when Luther wrote of this meeting, he insinuates the suspicion that Miltitz was acting a part. He had that suspicion at the time. But at any rate, Miltitz had chosen the most effective way of dealing with the man against whom Rome had tried first ridicule and then authority and had failed with both. Luther's sentence was always for open war; of wiles he had small store, and for them small respect. The downright blow of Richard's two-handed sword was always his. But he was susceptible to flattery and suave persuasion, though unmoved by denunciation or threat. And so, whether the papal envoy's condescension and expressed good will were genuine or feigned, he made very considerable advance. He asked Luther to consult for the things that make for peace, and promised to bring it about that the Pope would do the same. Luther readily promised to do all that he could with a safe conscience, saying at the same time that he also desired peace, that he had been forced to do what he had done, and that he was in no way to blame for it.[2] This good beginning led to an agreement which Luther promptly reported to the Elector. Both parties were to be forbidden to preach or write on the matters in dispute. Miltitz was to report to the Pope the state of things as he found them, and induce the Pope to commission some learned man to point out the erroneous articles in Luther's writings; and Luther, convinced of his error, was to retract it and refrain from all further attempts to weaken the honor and power of the Roman Church. Besides, he was himself to write to the Pope, confess that he had been too hot and sharp, show that he did not mean anything against the Church, but rather, as a true child of the Church, had opposed those who were bringing scandal and reproach upon it. Moreover, he was willing to publish a paper warning the people not to understand him as saying anything in his writings to the disgrace, but rather to the honor

[1] *Exploraverat etiam mulierculas et virgenes in hospitiis, quidnam de sede Romana sentirent? Illae ut ignarae hujus vocabuli et sellam domesticam cogitantes respondebant: Quid nos scire possumus, quales vos Romae habeatis sellas, ligneasne an lapideas?* Preface LOL, 1: 21.

[2] In a letter of February 2, 1519, he says: *Mutavit violentiam in benevolentiam fallacissime simulatam.* De Wette, 1: 216.

of the Church. His fault had been that he had brought out the truth with too much zeal, and perhaps unseasonably.[1]

Miltitz had made an impression on him, and he seems to have thought, at intervals, that the controversy was in the way of satisfactory settlement. He said to the Elector that if the affair were let alone, "it would bleed itself to death." What he thought at the time he continued to think down to the close of his life. He said in 1545, that the plans of Miltitz were lightly esteemed, but in his judgment if the Archbishop of Mainz had listened to his warning in the beginning, and even afterwards, if before the Pope had condemned him unheard and raged against him with his bulls, they had followed Miltitz's advice and at once restrained the madness of Tetzel, things would not have gone to so great lengths.[2]

Luther fulfilled his promise: he wrote his address to the people in February, and on March 3 he wrote the promised letter to the Pope. It is not long; there is no defiance in it; it is written with apparent sincerity and humility. He begins by saying, "Most blessed Father, necessity again forces me, the lowest of men, the dust of the earth, to speak to your blessedness and so great majesty." He begs the Pope graciously to incline his ears, truly the ears of Christ, to his little sheep. He laments that what he had undertaken for the honor of the Church had been misunderstood, and yet, "I can scarcely bear your wrath," said he, "and how to escape it I do not know." He had been asked to revoke the teachings of the Theses. He would readily do it, if by so doing he could accomplish what was sought by a revocation; but owing to the opposition of his enemies his writings had been too widely scattered to be recalled, and the impression they had made was too deep to be effaced. Besides, in Germany, where learning then greatly flourished, if he should wish to honor the Church, to revoke was the very last thing that he ought to do; his enforced revocation would but give occasion for still further dishonoring of the Roman Church. It was his enemies, the men whom he had withstood, who had brought injury, almost infamy, upon the Church among the Germans; and, as if that were not enough, they had accused him to the Pope as the author of their own rashness.

[1] For accounts of this interview and its result, see documents in Löscher, 2: 552 *seq.*; Walch, 15: 690 *seq.*; and Luther's letters to the Elector (De Wette, 1: 209) and his friend Christopher Scheurl (*ib.* 212). As to his assertion that he always honored the Church, compare the conclusion of his account of the hearing before Cajetan (LOL, 2: 392): *Protestor me colore et sequi Romanum ecclesiam in omnibus, solum illis resisto, qui nomine ecclesiae Romanae Babyloniam nobis statuere moliuntur*, etc. Cf. also Dieckhoff, *Der Ablassstreit*, p. 242 *seq.*

[2] LOL, 1: 21. Miltitz was very much pleased with the turn of affairs; he embraced Luther and shed tears. Luther wrote Spalatin that he pretended not to know that the nuncio's tears were forced, crocodile tears, in short. If we accept literally and fully what he says of himself, we must believe that he was not less an actor than Miltitz. At least, among his friends and privately he claimed the character of shrewdness and insight, at the expense of a large-hearted sincerity.

He continues: "Now, most blessed Father, in the presence of God and the whole creation, I testify that I have never wished, and that I do not to this day wish, to touch in any way your power, or the power of the Roman Church. So far from it, I most gladly confess that the power of the Church is over all things, and that nothing in heaven or earth is to be preferred before it except only Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. . . . The one thing that I can do in this case, that I freely promise: that I will hereafter let alone the question of indulgences, and say nothing about it (if only my adversaries restrain their vain boasts) and that I will hereafter publish abroad such things as shall tend to enlighten men and incline them to reverence truly the Roman Church, and not to impute to it the rashness of my opponents, nor imitate toward it the roughness that I have used, or rather abused." His only purpose was that our mother, the Roman Church, might not be defiled by avarice, and the people deceived into the error of preferring indulgences to charity. As to all other things, as they were matters of indifference, he cared nothing for them. He closed with the sentence, "May Christ preserve your blessedness forever."

This letter is sufficiently conciliatory, humble if we please—Luther had written very differently a short time before. His change of spirit was owing partly to Miltitz, and partly, no doubt, to his natural shrinking from a conflict not yet gone beyond the point of possible retreat, the result of which no one could foresee. He had been approached on the weak side. Kindness, gentleness of manner, and a condescending familiarity, coming from a man of high position, might go far toward softening anyone, but especially one who had sprung from the humbler walks of life, and had not yet outgrown an almost superstitious reverence for nobility, whether secular or ecclesiastical.[1] He who had been aroused by opposition was well-nigh won by the friendliness, real or assumed, of the papal nuncio. What the Pope on his side might have done can never be known. Just at that time an event occurred that made it necessary for him to suspend proceedings against Luther. The Emperor, Maximilian I, died January 12, 1519, and the choice of his successor seemed to Leo X, and doubtless to others, a matter of greater importance than the conciliation or destruction of a refractory monk. But besides turning the Pope's attention from Luther's case to other and more pressing concerns, the Emperor's death brought the Elector into especial prominence. He became regent of the Empire for Northern Germany, and in his new

[1] It is significant that the Elector, while perfectly friendly to Luther, and proud of him as a professor in his university, permitted him to go afoot to Augsburg, and took no pains to provide a suitable outfit for him. Later he went in a carriage to Leipzig, and in still greater state to Worms. He was still only the peasant's son at the beginning of 1519.

position more than ever held Luther's fate in his hands. In the changed circumstances, an attack on Luther was less likely to succeed, and at the same time, the Pope had less inclination and opportunity to press it.

Miltitz continued his negotiations. Leaving Altenburg he went to Leipzig, and in pursuance of his plan of separating himself and the papal cause from Luther's original opponents, called Tetzel before him. A victim was needed, and the notorious preacher of indulgences was to be sacrificed. Tetzel had a double mortification: he was reproached with being the author of all the calamities with which the Church was threatened, and at the same time accused of appropriating to himself some of the money that he had collected by his traffic. He was disowned and disgraced; his spirit was broken; sickness soon came and death did not linger. His humiliation excited the pity of his former antagonist, and Luther recalled in his old age, doubtless with pleasure, that he wrote a letter of sympathy and encouragement to Tetzel, after he had been cast off by those who had used him to their own advantage. He died August 19, 1519, perchance, as Luther said, "killed by a troubled conscience and the anger of the Pope."[1]

A part of the agreement with Luther was that he should submit to the judgment of some German prelate. Miltitz chose the Archbishop of Trier, and at an interview with Cajetan at Coblentz summoned Luther to appear before the Archbishop in that city. Luther did not think it safe to obey the summons, and no effort was made to force him to do so. The summons was given early in May.[2] Not long afterwards the whole matter was postponed to the next meeting of the Diet, which happened to be the famous Diet at Worms.

With the Elector's increased importance, there came increased responsibility; and if he needed it there came also increased moral support in the course that he was pursuing toward Luther. It was given by a letter from Erasmus. This letter was not the beginning of Erasmus's connection with Luther, but it was his first positive and effective interference in his affairs. He was seventeen years older than Luther, and was then, in 1519, fifty-three years old, in the height of his literary activity and recognized as the highest representative and most efficient

[1] *Sed conscientia et indignatione papae forte accubuit.* Preface, LOL, 1: 21. In his *Wider Hans Wurst*, Luther says of Tetzel: "A preaching monk, by name Johannes Detzel, a boisterous fellow, whom Duke Frederick had formerly liberated from the sack at Innsbrück, for Maximilian had condemned him to be drowned in the Inn (you may well suppose on account of his great virtue). . . . And Duke Frederick caused him to remember that, when he began to abuse the Wittenbergers; also he freely confessed it." (LDS, 26: 68.) Miltitz is also a witness against him. After the hearing at Leipzig, he wrote to Spalatin that Tetzel had been guilty not only of shameless preaching, but of embezzlement and extravagance, *auch hat er ij kinder.* Löscher, 3: 20; Walch, 15: 716.

[2] Walch, 15: 724.

promoter of literature in Europe.[1] Living at a time when polite learning occupied a place of eminence that it had never held before, and has never held since, his was a unique position. Dr. Samuel Johnson was not more autocrat in The Club in London than Erasmus was in the whole of Europe. No man of letters, from Cicero down; and not Cicero himself, has ever been so looked up to, consulted, applauded, followed. Young men of intellectual aspirations regarded it as the highest good fortune to meet him and to be noticed by him; and many of them received from him a stimulus and inspiration to their whole life. He was honored and pensioned by nearly every sovereign in Europe, and if he did not occupy high positions in Church and State, it was because he preferred a private station and personal freedom. There was no man then living whose opinion on a question of philosophy or theology would carry with it so great weight—it would be taken, not as his opinion merely, but as the judgment of the new age of enlightenment. As Rome spoke for the whole Church, so Erasmus spoke for all scholars.

He had just published, or was just about to publish, his edition of Suetonius's "Lives of the Cæsars," and he had dedicated it to the Elector of Saxony. This furnished the occasion for the letter. It was not unusual for such dedications to be paid for in gold—Erasmus himself had often been paid in that way—but in this case all that he asked was that the Elector would continue to favor the better learning, then, as he said, "everywhere flourishing in our Germany." The glory that the Elector might gain in this way, Erasmus thought, was equal to that which his ancestors formerly won in war. The Elector's favor might help in two ways: first, it might give direct encouragement to the friends of learning; and second, it might check the opposition of its enemies, who lacked only the occasion for mischief. They were "haters of the muses," "tyrants of the old ignorance." The recent publications of Luther had given the occasion they needed; they were accusing him of heresy, and pretending that the new learning was the inspirer of his heresies, and that the friends of learning were his supporters and protectors. In this they were influenced, not by hatred of heresy so much, as by their hatred of learning.

It has been suggested that Erasmus had a motive in saying that he did not know Luther, and that Luther did not know him; and that he could not, therefore, be suspected of favoring him from motives of friendship. The suggestion is uncharitable and probably unjust. There are no marks of timidity or half-heartedness in the letter. In the very next sentence he says that those who did know Luther, knew him to be a man of pure life, and as far as possible removed from all suspicion of avarice and ambition. He thought it incompatible with the gentleness that theolo-

[1] Luther at this time calls him *Literarum princeps*. LOL, 3: 13.

gians ought to have to rage so unmercifully against the name and fame of an upright man who had given no just cause of offense. The whole drift of the letter was to impress it upon the Elector that Luther's enemies were condemning him from interested motives, from hatred of him personally, and also from hatred of the new learning and free discussion, of which Luther was a representative. Erasmus concludes by saying, "While it is the duty of your highness to protect the Christian religion, it is also your duty, inasmuch as you are the guardian of justice, not to permit an innocent man, under the pretense of piety, to be given up to the impiety of others." He did not know what was thought of Luther at Rome, but where he was Luther's books were most eagerly read by all the best people, although he himself had not read them for lack of time.[1]

Erasmus's letter was dated April 14, 1519. On the 14th of May the Elector replied: "I rejoice," he said, "that the Lutheran cause is not condemned by the learned, and that with you Dr. Martin's writings are most eagerly read by the best men." He goes on to say: "By the help of God I will not permit any innocent man to be given up to the impiety of those who are seeking their own good" in his ruin.[2]

Things seemed to be going well with Luther, and in some respects they were going well; the suspension of active measures against him brought quiet, and in the quiet his writings were circulated and read. All this was good, and, as things turned out, only good. But in this quiet there was danger. If it had continued, the interest in the Lutheran controversy must have waned, and after a while ecclesiastical matters would have settled down in their old channel, and what became the "Lutheran tragedy" might have turned out to be only the "Lutheran incident." This result was favored by political conditions. As a rule, when an important matter has once thoroughly possessed the public mind, it does not give place until it has gone on to its logical conclusion—the exception occurs when it is thrust aside by some rival interest. In this particular case the rival interest was furnished by the death of the Emperor and the questions connected with the choice of a successor The affairs of the Empire might have supplanted the affairs of the Church, and when Europe had once become involved in the great national contests that soon followed, there would have been no time or inclination to return to Luther's affairs. Luther was right: "If let alone, the thing would bleed to death"; and it seemed to be in danger of being left

[1] LOL, 2: 457. Toward the close of his letter he says: *Quid istic de Lutherio sentiunt, nescio. Certe hic video libras illius ab optimis quibusque cupidissime legi, quamquam mihi nondum vacavit evolvere. Ib.* 459. It was the habit of Erasmus to profess that he had not read the writings of Luther, with which, nevertheless, he shows considerable acquaintance.

[2] LOL, 2: 460.

alone. For the present, at least, Luther was safe. He was under the strong protection of the Elector, and the Pope was too busy to care for him—his principal enemy could not disturb him, and he himself was pledged to peace. Let the peace last and the tide would ebb, the opportunity would pass.

But the peace did not last. There were two men who could not easily keep quiet: the one was John Eck, the other was Luther himself. Eck, it is said, provoked Luther to a renewal of the controversy, but Luther was very willing to be provoked. His promise of silence was only conditional: he was to be silent if the other side was silent. It may be that he really did not consider the promise or offer as binding; for, even while engaging to be silent, he was already preparing for a renewal of the discussion, and the train leading to it had long been laid. He and Eck had met in Augsburg in October, 1518, and it was there arranged that Eck and Carlstadt should meet and fight out their old battle. In the following January, in ostensible agreement with this plan, Eck published a schedule of the propositions that he wished to discuss. There were thirteen of them, six referring to matters between him and Carlstadt, but the remaining seven, and especially the thirteenth, were evidently aimed at Luther. The latter felt it, and early in February published a letter to Carlstadt in which he complained of Eck's theses and begged Carlstadt to secure him the privilege of taking part in the coming disputation. Eck justified his schedule: it was Luther's doctrine that he objected to, and he had no controversy with Carlstadt except as Luther's champion and defender.[1] As the two men were one in their teaching, he did not think that they ought to be separated in the disputation. His main business was with Luther, and yet he would not permit Carlstadt to be shoved aside; he would dispute with both. His propositions against Carlstadt were no pretense, and he could point out with his finger the places where Luther taught the things that he alleged against him.[2] Of course Luther replied, answering Eck's thirteen propositions with thirteen opposing propositions.

All these things took place in the first quarter of the year 1519, and during the time when Miltitz's plan for peace was getting itself tried. Luther was making his assuring address to the people, begging them to think kindly of the Roman Church and to have no thought of separating from it. At the same time he was saying to his friend Scheurl (February 20th): "God is in the midst of the gods. He knows what it is that he wishes to bring out of this tragedy. Neither Eck nor I is serving his

[1] LOL, 3: 19. *Cum autem Carlstadius sit propugnator tuus, tu vero principalis existas*, etc. Eck to Luther.

[2] *Non autem existimavi hos in disputatione separandos, qui in eandam sententiam manibus et pedibus conspirassent. Ib.* 6.

own purpose in this thing. I have often said that heretofore I have been playing with the matter, now at length I shall act in earnest against the Roman Pontiff and the Roman arrogance."[1] A little later he wrote to Spalatin, March 5th, that "it was never in his heart to wish to be separated from the papal see." The 13th of March he said, "I am studying the decretals of the Popes, preparing for my disputation, and (I whisper it in your ear) I do not know whether the Pope is Antichrist or his apostle."[2] It was only ten days before that he had written his respectful, submissive letter to the Pope.

What shall we think of this? It would be easy to say that Luther was acting a double part, playing fast and loose, blowing hot and cold. It would be more charitable, and probably truer, to say that his conduct was that of a strong man agitated by different motives; now reverence for long established order and duly constituted authority, now love of truth; at one time shrinking from the confusion and trouble that he saw just before him, at another conscious that he was working the work of God. One point is clear: he saw no inconsistency between utmost hatred of the Pope and most reverent obedience to him. He said, in the letter to Spalatin already quoted, "I am content that the Pope should be called and be Lord of all. What is that to me, who know that even the Turk is to be honored and endured for the sake of the power?" He would submit to the most tyrannical rule, as submitting to God, who permits, even ordains, that rule. We must interpret his conduct from his own point of view. Let us remember that few men have been subjected to such a trial as that through which he was passing; also, let us believe, if we can, that he was seeking the right way, but was not yet certain which was the right way; that his was the hesitation and vacillation of the eagle before he has finally chosen the direction of his flight. But we can hardly say that he was the docile, peace-loving, engagement-keeping man, provoked into controversy, dragged unwillingly into this disputation by Eck, which he himself afterwards claimed to be, and as has been so often asserted by others in his defense.

[1] De Wette, 1: 230.

[2] De Wette, 1: 239. In his letter of March 3 Luther says: "Ah, holy father, before God, before the whole creation, I affirm that I have never once had it in my thought to weaken or shake the authority of the holy See. I fully admit that the power of the Roman Church is superior to all things under God; neither in heaven nor on earth is there aught above it, our Lord Jesus excepted. Let no credit be given by your holiness to any who seek to represent Luther to you in any other light." (LOL, 2: 452; Michelet, 55.) In still more violent contrast is his letter to Leo, dated May 30, 1518: "Most holy father, I prostrate myself at the feet of your clemency, with all that I have and am. Bid me live or slay me, call, recall, disapprove, as it pleases you; I acknowledge in your voice the voice of Christ speaking and presiding in you. If I am worthy of death I shall not refuse to die; for 'the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, who is blessed forevermore, Amen.'" (LOL, 2: 132; Michelet, 34–36.)

Carlstadt suggested that the proposed meeting should take place at Erfurt or Leipzig; Eck chose Leipzig, wisely for his cause. Many thought the disputation would do more harm than good. The extreme papal party could not admit that there was now anything to be discussed; to allow the supremacy of the Pope to be called in question was almost heresy, and as to the question of indulgences that had been decided by the Pope's Brief. There was nothing to gain therefore by a disputation, and something might be lost; accordingly, the bishop of Merseburg, chancellor of the university of Leipzig, and some of the professors, did what they could to prevent the meeting. On the other hand, it was favored by the Elector of Saxony, and also by George, Duke of Saxony. The latter, afterwards to be an earnest opponent of the new movement, and to be cordially hated by Luther, saw no harm to come of discussion, but rather good. The Elector, as from the beginning, was favorable to anything that might lead to fuller knowledge. The Duke had not consented that Luther should take part in the discussion, but he gave a safe conduct to Carlstadt and "those who might accompany him." This opened the way for Luther to go to Leipzig; and, once there, he might hope to be permitted to dispute.[1]

In view of the interest that the disputation had awakened, and the number of persons who might wish to attend and witness it, the Duke had a large hall in the castle of Pleissenberg fitted up as the place of meeting. Whoever wished to be witness of a rare conflict, so the announcement ran, let him take care to be present. And indeed a most interesting discussion might well be expected. The subjects to be discussed were important, and the least known of the disputants was already widely distinguished. Carlstadt, or to give his full name, Andrew Rudolf Bodenstein of Carlstadt, was a man of learning and ability. In early life—we might say all his life—he was ready to receive new impressions, and as he grew older his impetuosity rather increased, and continued until years of disappointment and not a little hardship quieted him down. He was three years older than Luther, not less learned, had been longer a professor, and was mentioned with him and Melanchthon as attracting by his fame a great concourse of students to Wittenberg. But while the two were

[1] "Here Eck came to me in the tavern saying that he had heard I had given up the disputation. I replied, 'How can I dispute when I cannot get a safe conduct from Duke George?' He said, 'If I am not allowed to dispute with you, I do not care to dispute with Carlstadt. It is on your account that I am here. What if I procure a safe conduct for you? Will you not dispute with me?' 'Get it,' I said, 'and so it shall be.' He went away and presently a safe conduct was given me also and an opportunity made for me to dispute." Pref., LOL, 1: 19. Queen Victoria asked me, says Macaulay, about Merle D'Aubigné's work, and I answered that the writer was a strong partisan and too much of a colorist. ("Life and Letters," 2: 247). If the reader will take the trouble to compare the passage from Luther's Preface with D'Aubigné's translation of it, bk. v, ch. 3, of his History, he will see how just Macaulay's criticism is, in one case at least.

mentioned together, Carlstadt was beginning to be overshadowed by his greater colleague. As one of the principals in the disputation, he had precedence among the Wittenbergers, but when in Leipzig his carriage wheel came off and he was tumbled out in the dirt, his party felt relief that the accident had not happened to Luther. It was thought to be a bad omen for Andrew.

Eck already had a splendid reputation.[1] He was three years younger than his principal opponent. He had studied at Heidelberg, and took his Master's degree at Tübingen at fourteen. He further pursued his studies at Cologne and Freiburg. From 1510 he had been professor of theology in the university of Ingolstadt in Bavaria, having like Luther been previously a teacher of philosophy. He claimed for himself that he had read the whole Bible, the prophets excepted, before he was ten years old.[2] From his youth he had exercised his genius for disputing in the universities of Italy and Germany.[3] His ample learning, retentive memory, animated gestures, strong, clear voice, and bold, aggressive manner, all enhanced his skill in his art and made of him a most formidable antagonist. "It was a time when the joy of disputation was like the joy of battle, and victors achieved honor only less coveted than that which lured the stainless Bayard to deeds of daring. Victory in such a contest was almost equal to winning the Marathon race to-day, and the triumph of its champion brought nearly as much fame to a university then as the championship in football brings to an American university of our day. The men of the sixteenth century knew no better than to think that mind ought to count for more than muscle in a university; we of the wiser twentieth century have changed all that. If, then, Eck was eager for the contest with Luther, we might pardon him; if he should win, the victory would be great, and he might be victorious! Besides, we cannot say that his only motive in seeking this controversy was the hope of a personal triumph. There are so many motives that influence men: the best of us do not rise entirely above the earth, and the most worldly and ambitious of men may not be altogether earthy. Eck was

[1] Myconius calls Eck a filthy (*unflätig*) man, and says of him, "from youth up he had followed an adulterous, unclean and drunken life." (*Hist. Ref.*, p. 29.) This is a sample of the reckless slanders of the time. Myconius also calls Cochlæus a bad, passionate cockerel of a man (*bös, zornig Gockelmännlein, ib.*, p. 36). This because he wrote "wicked, lying books" against Luther. We can measure the formidable character of an opponent of Luther by the epithets that Myconius uses to describe him. This temper makes the opinion of the first Lutheran historian absolutely worthless; his witness to fact is sometimes valuable.

[2] During the discussion Luther insinuated that Eck was ignorant of the Scriptures. Eck resented it. It was the height of impudence, *Cum puer nundum decennis, demptis prophetis, bibliam totam legerem.* He added: "But it is nothing to the point how much a man has read." LOL, 3: 104; Seitz, 124.

[3] *Absit mihi gloriari, si in aliquibus Studiis vel Germaniae vel Italiae exercendi ingenii causa juvenis disputavi.* Eck to Luther. LOL, 3: 7.

probably a sincere, though not in some respects an extreme, Romanist; and he doubtless persuaded himself that he sought the glory of the Church and the promotion of the truth, in seeking this contest.

This disputation is one of the most famous in history, and as much perhaps as anything that occurred influenced the course of subsequent events. It brought the two parties into close and sharp contact, and permits us to see what were the views of each, and by what arguments they defended them. In giving an account of it, we need not follow the speakers step by step; we have the whole case before us, and it will be enough to indicate the material points made, without reference to the particular address in which they were made.[1]

Eck spoke first. Before beginning the debate he noticed Luther's statement that he had been forced into the discussion of the particular subject then before them. "The reverend father," he said, "declares that on account of his reverence for the Pope he would gladly have avoided this subject, if he had not been dragged into it by my proposition. But he will remember that my proposition would not have been necessary, if he himself had not denied that the Roman Pontiff was superior to others before the times of Pope Sylvester (A. D. 314-335). It is vain, therefore, for him to attempt to make me responsible for what he himself furnished the occasion." He continued: "Reverend father, your thirteenth proposition,[2] in opposition to mine, affirms that the Roman Church is superior to others only according to the worthless decretals Roman Pontiffs issued within the last four hundred years of approved history." Luther had added, "and the decree of the council of Nicæa, the holiest of all," but Eck omitted these words.

In opposition to this Eck said: "There is a monarchy and principate in the Church by divine right, and by the institution of Christ, and the text of Scripture and approved history is not against it. For the Church militant (which is one body, according to the teachings of St. Paul) has been made and instituted according to the image of the Church trium-

[1] The account of the disputation is made from the report prepared at the time by notaries, to be submitted to the judgment of the universities of Paris and Erfurt. It is to be found in Löscher's collection, 3: 292 *seq.*; in LOL, vol. 3; and a critical edition of the text, from previously unused sources was published in Leipzig, in 1903, by Otto Seitz, *Der authentische Text der Leipziger Disputation*. References are given on the most important points discussed to both the latter authorities.

[2] The thirteenth propositions of the two were as follows: Luther: "That the Roman Church is superior to all others is proved by worthless decretals of the Roman Pontiff put forth within the last four hundred years, against which are all approved histories for eleven hundred years, the text of the Holy Scripture, and the decree of the council of Nicæa, the holiest of all Councils." Eck: "We deny that the Roman Church has not been superior to the other churches before the time of Sylvester. But we have always recognized that he who held the see and faith of the blessed Peter is the successor of Peter and the vicar-general of Christ."

phant; in which there is one monarchy, all the heavenly intelligences being disposed in order, ascending to one, God. Such an arrangement Christ must have instituted on earth, for it is confessed that the Son does nothing except what he has seen the Father do (John V). Wherefore he is not of heaven who refuses to be subject to the head on earth, just as he is not of heaven, but of Lucifer, who will not be subject to God."

All these things, said Eck, can be fully proved by that pious soul, St. Dionysius the Areopagite, in his book on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, when he says, "For our hierarchy disposed in order handed down from God, has been conformed to the celestial hierarchy."[1] So also Gregory of Nazianzum in his apologetics says, "The most holy mysteries are celebrated according to the likeness of the celestial usage, by which we have fellowship on earth with the heavenly orders." For how monstrous it would be for the Church to be without a head, as almost all the heretics desire (as St. Cyprian intimates to Rogatian and Pupian)[2] that having weakened the head they may teach their errors and poison men's minds with impunity. And this was the principal reason (with others annexed) why the university of Paris condemned John Torriacencis for denying the primacy of the Roman Church. So also it was the error of Wiclif that the Church of Rome is not superior to others by the law of the Gospel.

At this point Luther interrupted and said: "When the Doctor argues that there is certainly a universal head of the Church he does well. And if anyone has privately agreed with him to maintain the opposite, let such a one show himself; it is no business of mine."

Eck resumed: "The reverend father[3] says that it is no business of his to defend the contrary of the proposition that I was endeavoring to prove, namely, that by divine right there is a monarchy in the Church militant as in the Church triumphant. In this I praise him, as he agrees with St. John in the Apocalypse: 'I saw the holy city descending,' etc. But coming nearer to the point, if the Church militant was not without a monarch, I would wish to know what other monarch there was or ever had been but the bishop of Rome, or what other first See but the See of Peter and his successors. For Cyprian says in his second letter to Cornelius, the Roman bishop, against the Novatians who were craftily

[1] LOL, 29: 26. He afterwards quotes Bernard more fully—I think it is said in a figure, that just as the seraphim and cherubim and the rest, angels and archangels, are under one head, God, so here also, under one head, the Pope, are primates or patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, presbyters, abbots, etc. Eck says: "Who does not know that this ecclesiastical hierarchy, according to Bernard, has been instituted by Christ, and as God in heaven is head, so the Pope is head in the Church militant?" LOL, 3: 34; Seitz, 63.

[2] The letters referred to are probably 64 and 68, ANF, 5: 365, 372. Eck probably used the word *innuit* advisedly, as Cyprian in the letters does not expressly say what he is made to say—he merely intimates it.

[3] Luther usually speaks of Eck as the *egregius Dominus Doctor;* Eck calls Luther *reverendus pater.*

going to Rome: 'Besides these things, having appointed a bishop for themselves, they dare to cross the sea, and to bear letters from schismatic and profane persons to the throne of Peter and to the chief Church whence sacerdotal unity arose.' Likewise Jerome testifies against the Luciferians: 'The safety of the church depends on the dignity of the chief priests, to whom if a definite and preëminent power had not been given, there would have been as many schisms in the Church as there are priests.'

"That Jerome means the bishop of Rome when he says 'chief priest' is clear from two of his letters to Pope Damasus, almost every word of which bears on the point, but for the sake of brevity I mention only a few: 'I talk with the successor of the fisherman and disciple of Christ.' 'Seeking no other reward but Christ, I am one with your blessedness that is, with the throne of Peter,' and lower down, 'Whoever does not gather with you scatters abroad.' From all which (Eck continues), any good Christian concludes that sacerdotal unity flows from the Roman Pontiff, and that the Roman Church has always been the chief Church, superior to all others, and that it is the Rock on which, as Jerome says, the Church is founded. Let the reverend father name another monarch of the Church in early times."

Luther began his reply: "I readily confess that there is a monarchy in the Church militant. The head, however, is not a man but Christ himself." In proof of this he went at once to the Scriptures. His first quotation was from Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians: "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet," and "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father." This, said Luther, Augustine explains as referring the kingdom of Christ to this present time, so that Christ, the head of the Church, should deliver up us, who are his kingdom. His next quotation was from the Gospel of Matthew, "Behold I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Likewise, he said, in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, Paul heard from heaven, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" where, as Augustine again says, the head was speaking for the members. "Wherefore," he continued, "they are not to be listened to who thrust Christ out of the Church militant into the Church triumphant."

He then turned his attention to the authorities quoted by Eck. The first, Paul, in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, speaks of Christ as the head of the Church, not of the Church triumphant, but of the Church militant. Also in the third chapter of First Corinthians, Paul asks "What is Apollos? What is Cephas? What is Paul? Is Christ divided?" Manifestly forbidding any other head but Christ. Eck's second authority, the passage from the Gospel of John, says nothing either of the Church

militant or of the Church triumphant, but in the judgment of all the learned teaches the equality of the Son with the Father. As to the quotation from Dionysius, that was not against him, for, said he, we do not deny that there is an ecclesiastical hierarchy; we do not dispute about this hierarchy, but the head of this monarchy.[1] It would indeed, as Eck had said, be a monstrous thing for the Church to be without a head. But the learned Doctor himself can give it no other head but Christ. "For if its head, as he calls the Roman Pontiff, being a man, dies, then the Church is without a head. But if Christ is the head in the meantime, until another Pope is elected, it is not less a monstrous thing that Christ should succeed a dead and give place to a living Pope. Eck thought this a ridiculous quibble, not worthy of the occasion. He referred to it several times. He explained that when a Pope dies, the Cardinals are in his place. But how was it, asked Luther, before there were any Cardinals? Eck did not give a satisfactory answer. Luther afterwards said, "My meaning is this: If the Church is not without a head when the Pope is dead, it would not be without a head if there were no Pope."[2]

The passage from Cyprian, who blamed the heretics for weakening the head, that they might teach their own error with impunity, Luther thought not at all in Eck's favor. For Cyprian was not speaking of the Roman head, but of any head, of any episcopate. If, he said, the very learned Doctor will stand by the authority of Cyprian, we shall settle the dispute this very hour. For Cyprian, in addressing Pope Cornelius, never calls him anything but his very dear brother. And in writing of the election and ordination of bishops, which he does in many letters, he proves from the Scriptures that they belong to the people and to two or three of the neighboring bishops, just as was determined in the most holy Council of Nicæa (canon 4). Moreover, the same blessed martyr, as quoted by Augustine in the second chapter of his book on baptism, says: "No one of us has constituted himself bishop, or by a tyrannical error has forced his colleagues to the necessity of obeying him, for every bishop is free to follow his own will, and just as he cannot judge another, so he cannot be judged by another: all of us wait the judgment of our

[1] In reply to this Eck said, "Let the reverend father, I pray, read a little more attentively the unapproachable Father Bernard 'On Consideration.'" He quotes a passage from Bernard affirming the likeness of the earthly to the heavenly hierarchy: "So here under the chief Pontiff, are primates or patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots and the rest." Bernard adds that is not to be lightly esteemed that has God as its author and takes its origin from heaven. LOL, 3:34. Luther says in reply, "I venerate St. Bernard, and do not despise his opinion; but in controversy the genuine and proper sense of Scripture ought to be taken." *Ib.* 39; Seitz, 67.

[2] *Mea ratio hoc voluit: si ecclesia non est acephala mortuo papa, nec acephala nullo papa.* He adds, *Transeo illud de Cardinalibus, quia omnibus notum, quando coeperint.* LOL, 3: 39; Seitz, 68.

Lord Jesus Christ." I most willingly admit, as Cyprian says, that sacerdotal unity sprang from the throne of Peter, but only so far as concerns the Western Church. For indeed, the Roman Church itself sprang from Jerusalem, which is properly the mother of all the Churches.

The last authority adduced by Eck was Jerome. The authority of Jerome had not been well introduced by the learned Doctor, said Luther, even if Jerome's authority were in all respects true; for the Doctor was seeking to show that the monarchical power of the Church of Rome was instituted by Christ and by divine right. This the words of Jerome do not prove. He says, "To whom, if a certain preëminent power be not given by all there will be as many schisms as there are priests." "Be given," he says, that is, it might be done by human right, all the others faithfully consenting to it. I do not object to this.[1] If the faithful of the whole world should agree that the bishop of Rome or of Paris or of Magdeburg should be first and highest bishop, the monarchy should be granted him out of reverence for the whole Church so agreeing. But this has not been done heretofore, is not now done, and never will be done, since even down to our time the Greek Church has not consented to it, and that Church has never been considered heretical.

Jerome was an important witness and Luther would make the most of him. He continued, That I have rightly given the opinion of Jerome I will prove by his letter to Evagrius, in which he says: "Wherever there is a bishop, whether at Rome or Constantinople, or Regius or Alexandria, they are of the same merit and of the same priesthood. The power of riches and the weakness of poverty make them higher or lower, but all are successors of the apostles." In his commentary on the Epistle to Titus again he says: "A presbyter is the same as a bishop; and before, by the instigation of the devil, jealousies arose in religion and it was said among the people, 'I am of Paul, and I am of Cephas,' the Churches were ruled by the common advice of the presbyters. But after each one began to think that those whom he had baptized belonged to him, it was decreed in the whole world that one chosen from the presbyters should be over the rest." And having cited authorities from Scripture to sustain him, he concludes: "Therefore, just as the presbyters know that it is by the custom of the Church that they are subject to him who is placed over them, so the bishops may know that rather by custom than by ordination of the Lord they are greater than the presbyters."

Luther closed his address by quoting a canon of an African synod:

[1] In reply to this quotation from Jerome, Eck said: "This I say, that it appears to me (always saving better judgment) that there was not such confusion in the primitive Church, that a bishop should not be distinguished from a presbyter. In proof of which thing, I bring forward St. Dionysius, who was older than Jerome." LOL, 3: 37; Seitz, 66.

"Let not the bishop of the first see be called the prince of the priests, or the high priest, or any such thing; but only bishop of the first see. And let not the bishop of Rome be called the universal bishop."[1] If, said he, sole authority belongs by divine right to the bishop of Rome, all these things are heretical, which it were rash to affirm.

Eck's first address has been given almost entire; Luther's with slight abridgement, and in general more freely. If Luther's address seems more logical and forcible, it is because it was so. Eck was conscious of the impression that his adversary was making and began his rejoinder with an apology. "The reverend father," said he, "has descended into the arena sufficiently instructed. Your most illustrious Dominations will pardon Eck, if occupied now for a long time with other things, he has not been able to bring together so many things, so roundly and accurately, as the reverend father has now done." He added, no doubt with the proper smile and gesture, "I come to dispute, not to issue a book." Luther's quotations from Cyprian needed explanation. Especially was the fact that he familiarly addressed the Pope as his dear and dearest brother to be explained. Eck did not think it important. No one, he said, is ignorant that the apostles were brethren, and yet Peter, just as his successor Cornelius, was the head of the apostles, the apex and vertex, according to St. Dionysius. He recurred to the matter later, and thought there must be some mistake about it. "As to Cyprian's calling Cornelius brother, he said, I think it was the notion of the compiler, and not of Cyprian; for if we read the letters of the holy bishops we will find that at times magnified and flattering modes of address were used. They call each other *beatissimus, sanctissimus,*" etc.[2]

Luther was willing to grant to Peter a primacy of honors. He said: "It is an evident mistake that he had power over the apostles. This, however, I freely confess, that Peter was first in the number of the apostles, and that a prerogative of honor is due him, but not of power: the apostles were equally chosen and received equal power. If the very learned Doctor, he added, can prove that Peter ever ordained any one of the apostles, yea, one of the seventy disciples, or that he ever sent forth one of them, I grant him everything and confess myself beaten. If, on the other hand, I shall prove that not all the apostles together

[1] The second synod of Hippo, A. D. 393, can. 25. Hefele, "History of Councils," 2: 399, Eng. ed.

[2] Eck would escape a difficulty by alleging a corrupted text. He did not know, or else did not remember, that it was much after Cyprian's time before bishops began to address each other as "your holiness," "your charity," "your eminence." These titles were borrowed from the court of Constantine, and only became the fashion after the Church was becoming rich by the patronage of the State. Cyprian's letters are now accessible to all in an English translation (ANF, vol. 5), and anyone may satisfy himself that it was that Father's constant practice to use toward the bishops of Rome the language of an equal to an equal.

could send forth one apostle, let him grant me that Peter had no power over the other apostles. He offered in proof that the apostles could not ordain Matthias (Acts i), and that Paul and Barnabas could only be sent forth by the Holy Spirit (Acts xiii). Eck did not accept the challenge. He said: "He asks me to prove that Peter ordained any of the apostles, but this is not pertinent to our business. For we do not inquire who ordained one or another, but who received the primacy over others from the Lord Jesus."[1]

In his first address Luther made the point that the Roman Church was not all the Church, that the Greeks had never submitted to the Pope or acknowledged the primacy. Christ had said, "On this Rock will I build my Church." He did not mean a part of the Church, but the whole; and he could not therefore have referred to the Pope, the head of the Roman Church, as the head of all the Church. The reference to the Greeks aroused Eck's indignation; he said, "I beseech the reverend father to be silent and not to insult us with Greeks and Orientals, who separating from the Roman Church became at the same time exiles from the Christian faith." Luther answered, "I rather pray Doctor Eck to spare so many thousands of saints, since up to our times the Greek Church has endured, and undoubtedly it will endure; for Christ did not receive from the Father the middle of the Roman Empire, but the whole world for a possession and an inheritance."

On the second day Eck came to what he called the principal thing, being about to prove, he said, that the primacy belongs to the Roman Church by divine right, and that Peter was considered the head of the Church by Christ. Now first he noticed the famous proof-text, "Thou art Peter," where, he said, according to the ordinary interpretation, Christ grants power to Peter that he might invite us to unity; for he constituted Peter the prince of the apostles, that there might be for the Church one principal vicar of Christ, to whom the members might go if, perchance, they should dispute among themselves; for if there were different heads the bond of unity would be broken. As to the meaning of the passage, he quoted Augustine, Chrysostom and Cyprian, passing by men of later time, Bede, Bernard and the like. Then more in detail he quoted from certain papal decretals. Luther in reply claimed that some of Eck's authorities were on his side: Augustine particularly had taught that the Rock on which the Church was built was not Peter, but Christ. He had indeed taught differently at different times, but he was oftener with him than with Eck. "But," he added, "even if Augustine and all the Fathers have understood Peter to be the Rock of foundation, single-handed I would oppose them with the authority of the apostle,

[1] LOL, 3: 40, 45; Seitz, 68, 73.

who says, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Jesus Christ.' "[1] Eck referred to this afterwards in a way that told strongly against Luther.

Also in the second day's discussion Eck referred to Hus and the Bohemians. He held firmly to the doctrine of the infallibility of a general council, and from his point of view it was much in his favor that the Council of Constance[2] had condemned Wiclif and Hus, who taught that the Pope's power was derived from the Emperor. "I ask the reverend father's pardon," said Eck, "if I hate the schismatic Bohemians, and regard them as the enemies of the Church, and if I am reminded of them in this discussion. For his thesis and the things he has said here to-day to prove that the primacy of the Church is only of human origin, in my poor and weak judgment are much like the views of the Bohemians, and as the report is, they are very grateful to him."

This cut Luther to the quick. It was, he replied, an insult to him, and he promptly resented it and declared his condemnation of the Bohemians, chiefly, however, because they were schismatics. "It has never pleased me, and will never please me, that the Bohemians wickedly came to a schism, that on their own authority they separated from our unity, even if right should be on their side. For the supreme divine law is charity and unity of the Spirit."[3] But Luther was clearly disconcerted, and not knowing what else to do, made a counter-charge against Eck that he had been unjust to the Greeks. Eck had said that in denying the Pope's authority the Greeks had excluded themselves from the Church and salvation and were heretics. To exclude so many thousand saints Luther thought was as detestable a blasphemy as could be spoken. In speaking of the Greeks his opponent had classed them all together, those of the earliest and those of the latest times, without discrimination. Eck in reply likened him to an unskilled cook, mixing incompatible things, Greek saints and Greek heretics in the same class, that he might thereby defend the errors of heretics. This still further angered Luther, who

[1] Luther added, "Besides, if the Church, against which the gates of hell should not prevail, had been founded on Peter, it would have fallen (when Peter fell), at the voice of the maid that kept the door." Eck answered that Luther had not noticed that the "I will build" is in the future tense. When Peter fell Christ had not yet given the keys, he had only promised them (LOL, 3: 60, 66; Seitz, 85, 91). Luther afterwards reminded Eck that Peter had received the keys when he prevaricated and was blamed by Paul at Antioch. LOL, 3: 73; Seitz, 97.

[2] Eck: "He asks me to prove that a council cannot err. I do not know whether he wishes to insinuate by this a suspicion against the Council of Constance. 'But this I say to the reverend Father, 'If you believe that a legitimate council errs and has erred, you are to me as a heathen and a publican.' " LOL, 3: 110; Seitz, 129.

[3] The notaries add, *D. Martinus petiit Eccium ne velit impingere tantam contumeliam, ut eum Bohemiam faceret, quia sibi semper inviti fuissent ideo quod ab unitate dissentiant.* LOL, 3: 61; Seitz, 86.

interrupted and complained that he had spoken falsely and impudently of him.[1]

Eck too, became angry and did not spare Luther. "The reverend father," he said, "glories that he speaks according to the divine law. Relying on his own understanding he flouts me because I follow the interpretation of the ancients. He insinuates that he will not follow Augustine and others who have said that Peter is the Rock, because their teaching is contradictory. I say in reply, how does he dare to believe that so great a Father has taught contradictory things in the same book, in the same chapter, and in the same sentence? I leave others to judge how modestly and humbly he spoke when he promised by himself alone to stand up in opposition to so many Fathers. This is indeed the true Bohemian style, to profess to understand the Scriptures better than Popes, councils, doctors and universities, and that although the Holy Spirit has never deserted the Church. Wonderful it would be if God has kept the truth concealed from so many saints and martyrs, waiting for the coming of the reverend father!"[2]

Luther had been identified with the Bohemians, and was in a manner compelled to accept the situation. He had been surprised and worried,[3] but he put on a bold front: he claimed that the Bohemians had been badly treated; they had been pursued and harassed as enemies, whereas they ought to have been dealt with kindly, and the effort should have been made to conciliate and win them. Then, too, some of Hus's doctrines were most Christian and evangelical. He did not care whether Hus and Wiclif had taught that it is not necessary to salvation to believe that the Church of Rome is superior to other Churches. He knew that Gregory Nazianzen, Basil the Great, Epiphanius, and the other Greek bishops and saints had not believed it. No faithful Christian, he said, can be forced beyond the sacred Scripture.[4] In defending Hus, Luther was bringing reproach upon the Council of Constance that had condemned him. Eck quoted Augustine to show that to cast doubt on the infallibility of a council was to weaken the foundations of truth. Luther said that the

[1] *Protestor coram vobis omnibus et publice, quod egregius D. D. hac mendaciter et impudenter de me loquitur.* LOL, 3: 64; Seitz, 89.

[2] Luther said, "This is not to dispute, but to stir up unfriendly feelings against me." LOL, 3: 73; Seitz, 97.

[3] Later Luther became much less sensitive about being called a follower of Hus. He writes to Spalatin: *Ego imprudens hucusque omnia Johannis Huss docui et tenui; docuit eadem imprudentia et Johannes Staupitz; breviter sumus omnes Hussitae ignorantes; denique Paulus et Augustinus ad verbum sunt Hussitae. Vide monstra, quaeso, in quae venimus sine duce et doctore Bohemico.* February, 1520. De Wette, 1: 425.

[4] *Nec potest fidelis Christianus cogi ultra sacram Scripturam, quae est proprie jus divinum, nisi accesserit nova et probata revelatio. Imo ex jure divino prohibemur credere nisi quod sit probatum, vel per scripturam divinam, vel per manifestam revelationem.* LOL, 3: 62; Seitz, 87.

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reference was unhappy, as Augustine was speaking of the infallibility of the word of God, and a council as only the creature of that word. To put a council and the word of God on the same level was a disparagement of that word, since it was conceded that a council may err.[1]

This Bohemian incident was the most exciting thing in the whole disputation. Luther had foreseen that he might be forced into a position in which public sentiment would be turned against him. Anywhere, and with the greatest prudence, he might arouse strong resentments by denying the infallibility of the Pope and council; and anywhere it would be much against him to identify him with the Bohemians. But in Leipzig such a thing was particularly exasperating. The university at Leipzig had a grievance. A little more than a hundred years before that time, Hus, then the most active spirit in Prag, had caused a division in the university there. Four nations were at that time represented in that university: Bohemians, Bavarians, Saxons and Poles; and the Bohemians having only one vote, could be outvoted in their own university. Hus brought it about that Bohemia should have three votes, instead of one, and the other nations one vote instead of three. The question leading to the change concerned the doctrines of Wiclif, Hus favoring and the other nations opposing them. The conclusion of the matter was that the other nations withdrew from Prag, five thousand students and teachers, and established two universities: the Bavarians the university of Ingolstadt,[2] Eck's institution, and the Saxons the university of Leipzig. The memories of that bitter controversy had scarcely been dimmed, and, besides, there was still a fresh recollection of the long and bloody Husite wars. When, therefore, Luther defended and apologized for the Bohemians, the people of Leipzig could not hear him with patience; he seemed the friend of heretics, and himself a heretic.[3] He keenly felt the hostility of the audience, and interrupted the discussion to address the people in German, and remove, if possible, their antagonism to him. The case was doubtless worse with him, because in other places, and especially in his own home, he had spoken almost entirely to friends and admirers, and this was a new experience for him.

All along, but now more than ever, Eck had the advantage of a favor-

[1] Luther mentioned some universally accepted doctrines taught by Hus. Eck he thought ought to allow him to believe that the Council of Constance had not really condemned these, but that they had been interpolated by some impostor! LOL, 3: 75; Seitz, 99. Later he said that councils had erred, and might err again, especially in things not pertaining to faith; and that a council had no authority for establishing new articles of faith, otherwise we would have as many articles in our creed as there are opinions of men. LOL, 3: 98; Seitz, 119.

[2] Founded in 1472, the university of Ingolstadt was united to that of Munich in 1826. The old building is now a *gymnasium* for boys.

[3] In a letter to Hoogstraten, Eck said that by defending the Bohemians, Luther alarmed many who at first favored him, and drove them from him; *quo temerario errore multos terruit et discedere fecit, qui primo ei favebant.* LOL, 3: 476.

ing audience. In other respects, however, he had serious difficulties to contend with. The words, "I say unto thee, Thou art Peter," etc., seemed upon their face to favor his cause; Luther had to find some other interpretation than that which first appeared. But in all other cases, Eck's proof-texts did not at once and clearly seem to be pertinent—he had to interpret into them the meaning that he wished them to bear, and in this he was not always successful. He insisted much on the command, "Feed my sheep"; in this he thought was conferred on Peter his office as shepherd or pastor of the whole Church. Luther's interpretation of it was far more plausible. Again, he thought the primacy given when the Lord foretold Peter's fall, and directed him after his conversion to confirm his brethren, the weaker being confirmed by the stronger, the lower by the higher. This was not so openly manifest that it would be accepted without proof, and no very satisfactory proof was found.[1] It also seemed to him proof of Peter's primacy that he was named first in the list of apostles, that he was sent to pay the tribute money for himself and the Lord (Matt. 17:27); that he was commanded to follow Christ, not simply (as Eck interprets) in the manner of his death, but also in the order of magistracy, and that he was commanded to walk on the sea, where, according to St. Bernard, the sea means the world, and the walking on it that all the world was to be subject to Peter.[2] That all these passages mean what Eck and some of the Fathers thought them to mean would hardly occur to the uninstructed reader.

While Eck's Scripture proofs needed interpretation, Luther's on the other hand generally seemed at first view to mean what Luther said they meant; and Eck's interpretations of them could not always be heard with a serious face. The very fact that so many of them taxed his ingenuity, could not but be felt against him. When reminded that St. Paul rebuked the Corinthians for making parties and exalting one apostle over another, "Very true," he said, "but the apostle was condemning personal ambition, and the passage is nothing against the primacy." When told that Paul claimed to be the apostle to the gentiles, as Peter

[1] Eck did not give proof, but authority. Luther said that there were two ways of interpreting. First, Peter, if you love me, that is if you seek your own and do all things to please your flatterers, feed my sheep, that is, be first and lord of all. This sense, he said was not in his codex. The second way was, If you love me, that is, if you deny yourself, if you lay down your life for me, if you despise all dignity and love nothing besides me (as Augustine happily expounds it), Feed my sheep, that is, teach, preach the word, exhort, pray, set a good example. For the Greek word in this place does not mean simply to rule and to feed, but sweetly and gently to care for and to do all things, that nothing may be wanting to the sheep. LOL, 3: 94, 95; Seitz, 116–118.

[2] See the summing up of the 8th of July. LOL, 3: 121. "As to what St. Bernard says of Peter's walking on the sea, Luther says that it has nothing to do with the primacy. I wonder that he can say this if he read Bernard, for Bernard certainly intends to prove from this that Pope Eugenuis had the primacy over the rest, and that the whole world ought to be subject to him." *Ib.*, 124; Seitz, 139–141.

was to the Jews, "True," he replied, "but Paul was there only stating a fact and was not at all denying the primacy." When told that Paul, in mentioning the officers of the Church, fails to make mention of the Pope, "True enough," says Eck, "but the fact that he says nothing about the primacy in that place does not prove that there was no primacy." The apostle John in describing the New Jerusalem mentions twelve foundation stones. "Very true, but he does not say that Peter was not, in another sense, the one foundation." The Pope claimed the right to ordain bishops; if Peter was Pope he ought to have exercised that right; but there is no proof that he ordained the other apostles. In the case of Matthias, the new apostle, neither Peter nor all the apostles could choose him; he was chosen by the Lord. But Eck had no doubt that Peter ordained him and all the rest. It was a plain case; they were bishops; Christ did not ordain them, and they did not ordain themselves; therefore they must have been ordained by Peter, whom Christ had appointed universal bishop, when he said, Feed my sheep.[1] Paul mentioned that at Jerusalem he had not yielded to Peter and James; that whatever they were, it was nothing to him, since God is no respecter of persons. This, Eck thought, was nothing against the primacy of Peter. What Paul meant was that Peter and James were men of humble origin, without learning or culture, and that God, in choosing such men to the apostleship, showed that he was not influenced by men's outward condition. Luther made some movement, perhaps smiled, when Eck said this. Eck's happy facility of conjecturing made him say that if he had the right of supposing he might suppose anything; he might suppose that the apostle John was a chancellor, probably alluding to Eck's office as vice-chancellor of his university.

Eck was at a decided disadvantage in having undertaken to prove that the Pope is Pope *jure divino*. This was a proposition that many of his audience accepted without proof; they needed no authorities or arguments to convince them of it. It might seem, therefore, that the burden of proof was on him who would deny it; that it was Luther's business to prove that the Pope was not Pope *jure divino*, and that Eck took the burden that properly belonged to his opponent. But a proper understanding of the case will convince us that Eck had no choice.

The Papacy was a very old institution; for many years, centuries rather, the Pope had held the first place in the Western Church—no true Catholic thought of disputing his supremacy or of inquiring how he obtained it.

[1] In this the Doctors agree, that at the Supper Christ made his disciples priests in giving them power over the true body of Christ, saying, This do in remembrance of me. And then, on the day of the Resurrection, he gave them power over the mystical body: Receive ye the Holy Spirit. But the primacy and prelacy of the whole Church he promised Peter: Feed my sheep, as Gregory, Chrysostom and other Fathers testify. LOL, 3: 83; Seitz, 106.

In one of the passages of the discussion, while they were all dining at the Duke's palace, the Duke said to the disputants, "Whether the Roman bishop is Pope *jure divino* or *jure humano*, he is Pope."[1] The inference was that the whole discussion was a dispute about words and of little practical importance. The Duke expressed the opinion of many who looked at the question superficially; and, in point of fact, it was only in recent times that any felt it necessary to claim for the Pope a divine right to his position. So long as he ruled according to the canons, or exercised those functions that law or custom had assigned to him, his power was unquestioned; but when he began to claim the right to make laws, to forgive sins, to remit penalties both on earth and in Purgatory, to dispense the spiritual treasures of the Church, to wield not an ecclesiastical but a divine power, it was inevitable that men should ask where he got so great authority. If he ruled only by the right that the Church gave him, he was exceeding his powers. If Christ himself had not committed such authority to him he was a usurper and an impostor—such things as the Pope claimed could be innocently claimed only by a man who held a divine commission. The case was such that the Pope must recede from his claims, or else show that he acted by divine right.

It was this state of things that forced Eck to undertake the office of affirmant rather than respondent in the discussion.[2] It was with the divine right of the Papacy as it afterwards was with the divine right of kings, and as it has been with other human conceptions: An institution is created to meet some social, political or religious need; in time its origin is forgotten; it is supposed to have been from the first, and to be part of the general constitution of things. The circumstances change so that it is no longer useful; it may even be oppressive; or it gets to itself new functions, claims new powers, and at last grows into a position of antagonism to some fundamental right or conception. Then comes a revolt, and the institution is swept away or forced back into its legitimate sphere and limitations. In the case of the Papacy there were two causes of revolt: first, the necessity for such an institution had almost, if not entirely, passed away; second, the necessities or ambition of the Popes had put on it a weight too great to be borne.

Four days were spent in discussing the position of the Pope and the Roman Church. Other questions followed, Purgatory, penance, indul-

[1] *Princeps Dux Georgius prudentissime ambos nos verberans dixit: Sive hoc sit jure divino, sive humano, Romanus Pontifex est et manet summus Pontifex.* LOL, 3: 241. Luther again mentions in his Preface what the Duke said (LOL, 1: 20), but interprets it somewhat differently. In 1545 he thought that the Duke would have approved Eck and blamed him if he had not been influenced by his arguments. In 1519 he remembered that the Duke had chided both, *verberans.*

[2] In the latter part of the disputation the parties changed places: Luther affirmed and Eck denied.

gences. But in discussing these, no new points were developed. Luther afterwards said that he himself hardly knew in what way he and Eck differed about Purgatory and penance.[1] They were nearly agreed about indulgences. Eck thought, indeed, that they ought not to be despised, but at the same time no one ought to trust in them. If, said Luther, the indulgence sellers had said this, "no one even to this day would have heard my name." And if the people had known that they were not to trust in indulgences, the indulgence sellers would have died of starvation.[2]

Neither party was altogether pleased with the manner of discussion. Eck did not like it that what was said had to be taken down by notaries, and that in order to do this he had to crush the impetuosity and swing of his eloquence. The Lutheran party were put to a disadvantage by not being allowed to bring in books of reference; the disputants were to trust to memory and there was no ready way to verify quotations; Luther sometimes felt that Eck did not honestly use his authorities, and both were liable to misquote. Melanchthon had in mind when he went to Leipzig an ideal discussion, in which both sides seek only truth, in which opinion is calmly compared with opinion, and in which defeat brings no humiliation and victory no glorying. Of course he was disappointed. The noise and confusion shocked him; the lack of logical pertinency surprised him, the eager desire for victory scandalized him. Luther felt very much the same way: he thought the discussion a waste of time.

Eck had the favor of the university and people of Leipzig at the close, as at the beginning. He was fêted and dined and in many ways honored. Luther, on the other hand, felt that he had not been generously treated, but he excepted some from the blame. In the university there were candid and earnest friends of learning, and the city council and the better class of citizens much regretted the discourtesy shown him. He heartily praised Duke George,[3] who did everything possible to make the disputation profitable, and he owed nothing to the university except all honor. This last was said with qualification. He was evidently downhearted, but not without some crumbs of comfort: he did not go home altogether empty-handed; he carried with him, as he thought, some increase of fame. Eck praised his learning, and the Leipzig people, while claiming the victory for Eck, thought he would have been defeated if they had

[1] Eck afterwards thus stated the case: "Doctor Martin said that he knew there is a Purgatory, but that it could not be proved from Scripture. I undertook to prove from Scripture that there is a Purgatory." LOL, 3: 491.

[2] LOL, 3: 234, 235.

[3] "Most of all is to be praised the illustrious prince Duke George, who with real princely kindness and magnificence omitted nothing to bring it about that the disputation yield good fruit, and that the pure truth should be sought rather than glory." LOL, 3: 230. This compares curiously with many of Luther's subsequent sayings about this prince.

not helped him! Eck, however, thought the people were good enough, but that he had contended alone.[1] He certainly had shown himself a disputant of great endurance and skill. Luther spoke of him as a man of varied and copious classic and scholastic learning, but who had scarcely saluted sacred learning from the threshold. In another place he less elegantly said that Eck knew about as much of theology as an ass does of music. The man at Leipzig who most pleased Luther was Melanchthon; and when Eck, after the discussion, attacked the young teacher of Greek, Luther put strong arms of protection about him. He was not ashamed to confess that he daily gave up his own judgment in deference to Philip's. "Not that I praise Philip," he said, "who is a creature of God and nothing, but I venerate the work of God in him." Melanchthon had been with Luther a year, and was twenty-two years old.

Luther felt that he was overmatched at Leipzig, but such was hardly the case. He spoke to a hostile and Eck to a friendly audience—that was a weight for him to carry. Several times he lost his temper and interrupted Eck, once with the cry, *mendacium*, but as a rule he kept more clearly to the point than his adversary, and his method was more orderly. Some of Eck's quotations were scarcely pertinent to the case, and when they were pertinent they would have weight only with those who attributed a sort of infallibility to the old teachers—with Protestants they have no weight at all. He quoted Popes in defense of the Papacy,[2] which was hardly allowable, unless the papal infallibility was taken for granted, and that was virtually the thing in dispute. We know now that some of Eck's papal decretals were not genuine; they were among the famous forged decretals of Isidore. Luther suspected some of them, because they showed ignorance unworthy of any Pope, but as yet they were not rejected.[3] In the interpretation of Scripture Luther was much superior to his antagonist. As a rule, when both quoted the same authorities, Luther quoted them more justly and pertinently. When the report of the discussion was printed and could be read calmly, Eck's present

[1] Both disputants virtually confessed defeat. Eck says in a letter to Hoogstraat: "In many things Luther got the better of me; because first they brought books with them, in which they had notes, and which they took into the place of discussion; second, because they took notes of the discussion and conferred about them at home. And third, because there were so many of them, and he alone, with only justice on his side, stood against them." LOL, 3: 477.

[2] Eck said, "It is certain that the holy Popes also wrote that they were universal bishops, as Sixtus and Victor." LOL, 3: 103. Sixtus and Victor are among the early Popes to whom the pseudo-Isidore attributed letters, forged of course.

[3] Pope Anacletus is made to say that the most holy Roman Church did not obtain the primacy from the apostles but from Christ himself. He translated Cephas "head," and used the word "cardinal" as referring to the Church some centuries before it actually came to be so used—which ignorance, said Luther, ought not to be attributed to so great a bishop. Eck had the indiscretion to insist that Cephas might mean "head," and to quote authority to prove it. LOL, 3: 60, 74; Seitz, 86, 98.

victory, if it was a victory, came to be final defeat. In a little more than a year from the time of the discussion, the sentiment was so far changed in Leipzig that he could not safely appear there in public.

In some respects Eck doubtless failed, but if he expected to win a lasting name for himself he was not disappointed; wherever Luther is known, Eck will be named with him. Their disputation renewed a contest that might, but for that disputation, have died out. It not only renewed it but widened it. It brought into prominence the distinction between a Pope by divine commission and a Pope by human appointment, a distinction that there had been no occasion to make before, but once made was never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER V

THE BULL OF EXCOMMUNICATION

THE Leipzig disputation wrought a change in Luther—this was one of the first and most important effects of the contest. He had been sincere in his professions of loyalty to the Pope, and had no wish to separate from the Roman Church, for in his view a schismatic was little better than a heretic. He had a clear, strong conviction that the Pope was leading men astray, and destroying the liberties of the Church; but at the same time he felt that it was his duty to submit to him, whatever he might be or do.[1] But it came to him, as it had not come to him before, that the Greeks were Christians, and yet not subject to the Pope; that the Bohemians, too, were Christians, although they had no connection with the Roman Church; and that it might be the same with the Germans, or any other people. This new light, after a while, revealed to him an open and plain way, and he did not hesitate to take it—in fact, there was no other way for him. If there had been no discussion, he might have gone on recognizing the Pope as head of the Church, and giving him reverence as such. "We do not at all differ," he said, "as to the thing itself, but only as to the causes and origin of the thing. For I do not deny that the bishop of Rome is, has been and will be first; as to this I do not dispute, as to this there is no question."[2] After a while he learned better; he found out that his adversaries would not and could not recognize his Pope as any Pope at all; and that their Pope was a Pope whom he could not acknowledge. It was at Leipzig that he was taught how irreconcilable was the difference between them.

He did not at once see that this difference must put him in an independent and hostile position. In his first publications after the disputation

[1] "I am content that the Pope should be called lord of all. What is that to me who know that even the Turk is to be honored and endured for the sake of the power?" Luther to Spalatin, March 5, 1519. After the disputation, in his explanation of proposition 13 on the power of the Pope, he repeated in many ways his belief that the Pope, although he was not the head of the Church by divine right, was yet to be honored. It weighed much with him that the Pope was Pope by the common consent of all the faithful. To despise that common consent would be to deny Christ and contemn the Church. "Is it possible," said he, "that Christ is not among so many and so great Christians? But if Christ is there, and Christians are there, we ought to stand with Christ and Christians in everything that is not contrary to the command of God." LOL, 3: 302.

[2] *Primum vides, lector, de re ipsa nos non admodum dissentire, sed de causis et origine rei. Nam nec ego nego Romanum pontificem esse, fuisse, fore primum, nec de hoc disputo, me hoc quaeritur.* Explanation of proposition on Pope's power. LOL, 3: 299.

he spoke of the Pope just as he had all along been speaking of him, still deceiving himself with the notion that the dispute was only as to the manner of the thing, not the thing itself. But that could not last. If it were a matter of material interest, we might perhaps discover exactly when it was that he first came to a full understanding of the case; it is enough for our purpose to know that in the next year his learning was complete. In October, 1520, he wrote: "Willing or unwilling, I am compelled to become more learned day by day, having so many and so great teachers." Prierias and others had instructed him about indulgences. He had thought they might be of some use; he had found out that they were mere impositions. Afterwards, he says, Eck and Emser and their confederates began to teach him about the primacy of the Pope. "And here, that I may not appear ungrateful to so learned men, I confess that their works have profited me much. For although I had denied that the Papacy is of divine, I had admitted that it is of human, right. But I have heard and read the most subtle subtleties of those valiant soldiers, and I now know and am certain that the Papacy is the kingdom of Babylon, and the power of Nimrod, the mighty hunter." A little later he says, "Unfortunately, at the time of the Leipzig disputation I had not read John Hus, otherwise I should have maintained not some but all the articles that were condemned at Constance, just as I now hold them, having read that most wise, noble, Christian book of John Hus, the like of which has not been written for four hundred years, and which has now, through the divine favor been put in print, to testify to the truth and put to open shame all those who have condemned it."[1]

The work here mentioned by Luther is Hus's treatise "On the Church." But it is not the work itself so much as the fact that it had been printed, and Luther's pleasure in the fact, that is significant. His reference to it is like the note of the robin, a harbinger of spring—it marks the approach of a new season. It was not the first note of that kind. At the close of the third day's dispute at Leipzig, according to the regular order, the disputants must pass to the next question on the schedule. Luther felt that he had yet more to say in reference to the Pope's power, and announced that he would continue the discussion in writing. It was a very simple and natural announcement, but it had a significance that neither Luther nor his hearers fully comprehended. He meant nothing more than that he would transfer that particular case from the forum of the university to the forum of the press; he did not realize that what he was about to do in one case was soon to be done in all cases—that in one of its most important functions, that of diffusing knowledge, the

[1] See the opening paragraphs of Luther's treatise "On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church." Wace and Bucheim, 141 *seq.*

university was beginning to give place to a mightier and more effective agency. There, at Leipzig, on the 6th day of July, 1519, one of the disputants virtually announced that the supremacy of the university was ended, and the reign of the printing-press was begun. It had been agreed that the report made by the notaries should be submitted to the universities of Erfurt and Paris, and that they should decide which of the disputants had the better arguments. But before the universities had had time to decide, Luther and Eck and others had already through the press appealed to the world; and from that day to this, not the learned few, but all who can read, have been the moderators and judges of all great disputes.

Before the coming of Luther, the press had been used in the controversy of Reuchlin with the adversaries of Hebrew learning. But the affair of Reuchlin was local and temporary, and the interest in it was confined almost entirely to the learned. It was different with the Lutheran movement: that was on a wider field, concerned men of all classes, touched the most vital interests, and awakened universal attention. It presented the first real opportunity of using and testing the power of the newly invented art of printing. Then came with all its popular efficacy the controversial pamphlet; and Luther, as he was among the first, was also among the greatest of pamphleteers. When he published his Theses he was surprised at the rapidity with which they found their way into all Germany—it was almost as if his thoughts had been silently borne upon the winds. It was the same with his "Explanation of the Theses," with his reply to Prierias, with Eck's "Obelisks" and his answering "Asterisks." Having early learned by experience how greatly the press increased his power, he made a lavish use of it; he framed his thoughts with a view to printing them, just as others framed theirs with a view to oral expression. He wrote rapidly, sometimes vehemently, always vigorously, and with a definite object in view. He cared nothing for style; he had no ambition for literary fame; he wrote for present effect; that produced, he was content his writings should be forgotten.[1] He was among the first to use the press for immediate popular effect—he set the fashion, but it was immediately and enthusiastically followed. It had been the old custom to send around theses and discussions in manuscript; that custom passed out, and those who had anything to say said it in print—even personal letters, if they contained anything of public interest, were almost sure to be published.[2]

[1] *Habere enim puto theatrum meum suam horam, post me alius sequetur; si Dominus volet, ego tempori meo satisfecerim.* LOL, 3: 297.

[2] Bibliographers have calculated that, in the five years before the posting of the Theses, 527 books were published in Germany; in the five years following there were 3,113 books published, of which four-fifths were favorable to the Reformation. Of these, about 600 were published in Wittenberg alone. Cf. Schaff, 6: 560 *seq.*

The beginning of the Lutheran controversy had stimulated literary activity; the renewal and widening of that controversy by the Leipzig disputation led to still greater zeal in publishing. Almost immediately after his return to Wittenberg, Luther wrote and published an account of what took place at Leipzig.[1] "Because," said he, "in the disputation there was rather a waste of time than a searching for truth, I wish to publish an explanation of my propositions, being sure that a better understanding of the questions may be reached in that way than by two weeks' discussion of that kind." This account he followed by a second and somewhat enlarged edition of a treatise on the power of the Pope, which he wrote before going to Leipzig. Melanchthon also gave an account of the disputation in a letter to Oekolampadius, which was published; it was his first publication in reference to the matters in dispute, and was such a letter as we might expect the young professor to write—a little stiff and overlearned, it may be, but calm, judicial and weighty. He had already vexed Eck at Leipzig by giving suggestive hints to Carlstadt and Luther; he vexed him even more by his letter. Eck replied, and Melanchthon rejoined in a tract in which he showed himself already the equal of his contemporaries in learning and judgment, and more than their equal in courtesy and moderation.[2] On Eck's side, Emser, professor at Leipzig, wrote a letter to the Bohemians, in which he dwelt on the things that Luther had said against the Husites, and at the same time insinuated Luther's heresy in the Catholic sense. The letter was ingenious: in proportion as Luther had lost favor at Rome he had gained it in Bohemia; Emser being sure that the papists sufficiently hated him, sought to show that the Husites had no cause to love the Saxon. Luther replied at length and effectively, in a paper addressed "to the Emserian Goat" (alluding to the goat of Emser's coat of arms) and Emser rejoined "to the Bull of Wittenberg." Eck, too, replied to Luther's account of the disputation, and Luther again to Eck. Oekolampadius also took a hand in the fray, in a letter from the "ignorant canonists," as Eck had called some of Luther's friends.[3] At this time, too, Lucas Cranach, the painter, furnished sketches and caricatures, for which Luther supplied explanations

[1] *Resolutiones Lutheri super propositionibus suis Leipsiae disputatis.* Published in August, 1519. LOL, 3: 225 *seq.*

[2] Eck thus spoke of Melanchthon: "The Wittenberg grammarian, not unlearned indeed in Latin and Greek, has dared in a published letter to attack me . . . and to take upon himself the office of judge, which we assigned to the university of Paris." LOL, 3: 488. In his reply Melanchthon sufficiently asserted himself. He said in reference to the authority of the ancients, "How often, I pray you, has Jerome been mistaken! how often Augustine! how often Ambrose! And these men are not so unknown to me that I may not venture to speak thus freely of them. Yea, it is possible that I know somewhat more about them than Eck does of Aristotle." *Ib.* 499, 500.

[3] Most of these documents, all that are of importance, are printed in Vols. 3 and 4 of Luther's *Op. Lat. Var.*

and notes. And so, invective, apology, explanation, sermon, satire, lampoon, cartoon—in a word, all kinds of writing—were used in an earnest controversy following the Leipzig disputation; and the art of printing was made to do all the kinds of work, good and bad, of which it was capable, or has since performed.

At this time, when both parties were so earnestly contending, Erasmus again came to Luther's assistance. It was in a letter to the Archbishop and Elector of Mainz, even more definite and outspoken than his previous letter to Elector Frederick of Saxony. He did not intend it to be published, but it was published. Luther, he said, had dared to doubt about indulgences, but not until his adversaries had imprudently claimed too much for them. He had dared to speak too rashly of the papal power, but not until the other side had written too rashly of it. He had dared to despise the teachings of Thomas Aquinas, but not until the Dominicans had extolled them almost above the Gospels. Going through the whole catalogue of things in which Luther had offended, he claimed that in each case the other side had provoked his opposition; and in general he represented the state of the Church to be such as to torture pious minds. Luther acknowledged the value of this letter to him, but grudgingly and with unworthy lamentations.[1] In thinking of the printing press of that day, it is just to recall that no one used it more worthily than Erasmus of Rotterdam.

As the Leipzig disputation had driven Luther to a more advanced position, so it had confirmed Eck in his position as leader of the papal party in Germany. He and Luther had met and parted with mutual respect—Eck praised Luther, and Luther praised Eck—but this could not last; neither had gained a clear victory over the other, and neither was thoroughly pleased with himself and his own performance. Each was, therefore, in a position in which it was easy for him to think ill of the other; the controversy, not without a personal element from the first, grew to be bitterly personal at the last. Luther suspected Eck of maliciously desiring his destruction, and the part that Eck was to play went far toward justifying the suspicion. As it was with Eck and Luther, so it was with Luther and Duke George of Saxony. Even at Leipzig the Duke had not been pleased with Luther's apology for Hus. His territory joined Bohemia; he himself was descended from a Bohemian family, and he had an inherited dread of the Bohemian heretics. He thought the doctrine of the Husites, especially the doctrine that a ruler in sin lost the right to his subjects' obedience, dangerous and subversive of all government, and that to be a Husite was to be a public enemy.

[1] Luther to John Lange, Jan. 26, 1520, De Wette, 1:396. The letter of Erasmus is in his collected works, 3: 513.

Already not pleased with Luther, he was ready to break with him whenever an occasion should offer. Luther gave the occasion in a sermon preached in November, 1519, in which he taught that it would be better if the Supper should be given to all men under both forms, in the wine as well as in the bread, the distinctively Husite practice. As soon as the Duke came to be against Luther, Luther was against the Duke; and ever afterwards spoke of him as his enemy and the enemy of all that was good. His feelings against the Duke were no doubt much embittered by the fact that the latter had advised Frederick, both neighbor and kinsman, to expel Luther from his dominions.

On June 28th, while Eck and Carlstadt were disputing about predestination and free will at Leipzig, a new Emperor was chosen at Frankfort. There were two prominent candidates for the imperial dignity, Francis I king of France, and Charles of Austria, recently become king of Spain. For a time Henry VIII of England was also a candidate (or rather, thought he was), but never with slightest prospect of success. Between Francis and Charles, however, it was a serious contest, and neither spared any persuasion of favor or money to win the prize. The Archbishop of Mainz favored Charles; his brother of Trier was the advocate of Francis. There was no view of the case that did not involve serious dangers. If Francis should be chosen, it was almost certain that the Empire would be involved in war with Spain; and in such case, the fact that Austria, one of the most considerable states of the Empire, belonged to the king of Spain, would produce an awkward complication of things. On the other hand, should Charles be elected, the likelihood was that there would be war with France. And besides the danger of war, whichever one might be chosen, there was also an objection to both of them—they were too powerful. A strong Emperor might endanger the local liberties of Germany. In ordinary circumstances this latter danger would have been conclusive against both Charles and Francis; but Europe, especially Germany, was at that time threatened by the Turks, and a strong Emperor was necessary to the public safety. It might be dangerous to have a strong Emperor, and it would be still more dangerous not to have a strong Emperor. The Electors were influenced by both these considerations.

At first their choice fell on Frederick of Saxony—in his hands German liberties would be safe. Once before, in similar circumstances, a Saxon Duke had been chosen Emperor: in the time immediately following the breaking up of the Empire of Charlemagne, when Northern and Eastern barbarians—Hungarians, Northmen, and others—were committing their ravages. The old Saxon, Otho, thanked the nobles for the honor but firmly declined it—the Empire needed a younger and more powerful

man, he insisted, and he turned the choice away from himself to Conrad, Duke of Franconia. At the close of Conrad's reign, he might have transmitted the power to his infant son, but as the circumstances of Germany had not materially changed, and a strong man was still needed, Conrad, influenced alike by gratitude and patriotism, gave his influence to Henry, son of that Otho to whom he owed his power. This was Henry the Fowler of history. As if to show that German patriotism was still a living force, the noble Frederick preferred the safety of his country to the highest human honor, and declined to be Emperor.[1] The choice was again between Francis and Charles. Charles was of German stock and that fact proved to be decisive; Elector Frederick made a brief address strongly favoring Charles; the Archbishop of Trier withdrew his objections to him and he was elected, *nemine contradicente*, as the record has it.

At that time little could be known of the personal qualifications of this prince for so high and responsible an office. Having been born in the year 1500, he was only nineteen years old, and was as yet untried. His election as Emperor made him the most powerful sovereign in Europe, and in the extent of his possessions he was probably the richest of all the German Emperors. On one side he was grandson and heir of Emperor Maximilian, who was born Duke of Austria, and by his marriage with the daughter of Charles the Bold became Duke of Burgundy and the Netherlands. On the other side he was grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, and inherited from them Spain and Naples, claims in Italy, and the recently discovered New World. And now, by his election as Emperor, he added Germany to his other dominions. He would have been singularly insensible to the influence of human grandeur and power if he had not felt the greatness of his position. The kings of Europe at that time were addressed as "Your Highness" or "Your Excellency"; Charles insisted on being called "Your Majesty." In this, however, he vainly sought distinction, as in a short time the old custom passed out, and the weakest and poorest king, equally with the Emperor, was styled "Your Majesty."[2]

The election of Charles was an event of the highest importance. His reign lasted through the whole time when the Reformation was struggling for the right to be; and on the political side no other person is to be compared with him in influence. His position as Emperor made him the defender of Christendom, the Pope, and the Church of Rome; this necessarily brought him into close relations with the papal party, and with the Pope as its head. To restrain as far as possible his great powers, the

[1] Sleidan says that agents of Charles offered Frederick a great sum of money for his refusal of the imperial crown, but Frederick refused it—his vote was not for sale; he had acted for the interests of his country, not for himself.

[2] Robertson's "Charles V," 1:352, ed. Prescott.

Electors imposed on him certain conditions, chiefly relating to German privileges, but several having a particular bearing on Luther's affairs. Of the former kind was the requirement that he should choose a council of Germans to govern the state—this was the Regency, or *Reichsregiment*, created in Maximilian's time; of the latter, that he should see to it that the Pope should not encroach upon the privileges and liberties of the Empire, and that he himself should subject no man to the ban of the Empire without a hearing.

The new Emperor was in Spain. It would be some time before he could hear of his election, and a still longer time before he could take any active part in ecclesiastical matters; but, after a while, he must favor the Pope against Luther. His election was, therefore, an obvious advance toward the threatening conflict. Luther's respite had all along been felt to be nothing but a respite; and now the march of doom, halted by the death of Maximilian, was again to begin. Some thought that Luther's only safety was in flight, and it occurred to him as a possibility that he might be compelled to seek refuge in Bohemia. This, however, was a thing thought of but not approved—to flee would be to give up all for which he had been contending—he must in some way stand his ground. The movement had not yet acquired sufficient momentum to carry it on without his help; he must not only continue in it, but continue to stand for it and represent it; and, as his dangers became more pressing and manifest, new sources of help and encouragement were developed.

One of the most embarrassing things in his situation was the burden that his protection put upon the Elector Frederick; as long as he remained at Wittenberg, his honored friend must, to some extent, bear with him the odium and danger of his course. It was a relief to him, therefore, that some other place of safety was open to him; and that there were men in Germany who, if matters should come to the worst, were ready to take his part. It was in the beginning of 1520 that he received his first letter from Ulric von Hutten, and through him an offer of an asylum from Franz von Sickingen. The first of these was poet, satirist, soldier, reformer; a man of restless and reckless disposition, brilliant, enthusiastic, and full of enterprise. In his youth he had been forced into a monastery against his will, and had escaped full of bitterness toward the monks and monachism. His passion was for learning, and his proudest distinction was that which Maximilian conferred on him, as poet laureate of Germany. He was a Humanist, a friend of the new learning and a representative man of the new age. Von Sickingen was a man of far more military and political significance; his resources were great; he was a tried and distinguished soldier, a German patriot, and at last lost his life in a vain effort, in which he and Hutten worked together, for the

unity of Germany. It is not easy to learn exactly what it was that drew these two men toward Luther. Possibly it was their strong German feeling, their hostility to the Pope as an oppressor of the Fatherland; Possibly it was sympathy for Luther in his fight against overwhelming odds—it was not the part of brave men to see a brave man crushed while contending for what he believed to be a righteous cause, the cause of God and of Germany. Luther did not accept their offer, but the fact that they made it brought him nearer to the German nobles, made him feel more keenly that his cause was Germany's cause, and no doubt suggested his appeal to the German nation.

This he made in the form of an "Address to the Nobility of the German Nation," published in June, 1520.[1] It was a cry for help, earnest and impassioned. The Church had fallen into a sad condition, evils were many and grievous; all peoples, but especially the people of Germany, were wronged and oppressed, and all the ordinary means of reformation and relief were denied. The Roman authorities paid no attention to appeals; threats and remonstrances did not move them; they had, as it were, surrounded themselves by three walls. By the first they excluded the secular authorities from interfering in religious matters, claiming that the spiritual is above the secular and cannot be judged by it. When they were assailed by arguments from the Scripture they reared a second wall: the doctrine that the interpretation of Scripture belongs only to the Pope. If a general council was threatened or demanded, a third wall stood in the way, namely, that only the Pope can call a general council. In order to correct the existing evils, the claims of papists must be disregarded; these walls must be broken down; and the secular rulers—all Christians indeed—must exercise their right to judge and condemn what is wrong in the Church. The notion that there is a distinction between the spiritual and the secular is untrue as well as mischievous: all Christians are of the spiritual order, and there is among them no difference but that of office; by baptism we are all together consecrated to be priests. It is equally wrong to suppose that the interpretation of Scripture belongs to any special order or office; all are taught of God. The Pope cannot be looked upon as an infallible guide, for Popes have often erred; and who can help Christendom when the Pope errs, if we may not believe one who has the Scriptures on his side? Break down the distinction between secular and spiritual, give to everyone his right to interpret the Scriptures, and the rest will follow—the papal defenses will be taken away. It was not the putting of class against class, the secular against the spiritual; it was the assertion that there is only one class—all are spiritual.

[1] For the German text of the Address, see LDS, 21: 274–360; Walch, 10: 296 *seq.* English version in Wace and Bucheim, 17–92.

Having asserted the right and duty of the nobility to take matters in hand, Luther next intimated some of the things that ought to be done. First of all, there ought to be a free general council, which would correct abuses, restrain the extravagance of Popes, reduce the number of Cardinals and make the Popes support them. The Pope's court ought to be reduced to one-hundredth part of its present proportions, and various sources of papal revenue were to be closed. The Pope was not to be permitted to claim superiority to the Emperor, and all those customs by which princes were in the habit of doing reverence to the Pope—the holding of his stirrup, and such things—were to be abolished. No more monasteries were to be built; all festivals were to be abolished and only Sunday retained; there ought to be no more indulgences, and fasting should be voluntary.

There were several things to which we must give a little more emphasis. Thus early Luther insisted that the clergy were to be permitted to marry. Many priests were already married in fact, but not in law; they had wives and children, but not with a clear conscience. Living in violation of Church law, they had to bear reproach and a sense of shame and guilt, although, he said, they were not violating the law of God; he wished them to be relieved, by taking away the prohibition to marry. His objection was to the general law which forbade all the clergy to have wives; if a bishop, or monks, or others, should be voluntary celibates, it was their own affair, and nothing was to be said against it. In this Luther made the proper distinction. If any number of persons, influenced by peculiar notions of devotion, or by enthusiasm, or ambition, or even class distinction should elect to repress or crush out their natural instincts, they might succeed in keeping themselves pure; but when the law requires all of a class to do what is difficult for a select few, the obedience to the law must in many cases be only formal. In times of religious enthusiasm, or when a sense of obligation to vows is strong, no great scandal may occur; but in seasons of religious declension, or when the authority of the Church for any cause is weakened, the law loses its binding power. It tightens or relaxes with changing circumstances, while the force that it seeks to restrain, is as constant as human nature. In every time of relaxation, passion asserts itself and the law is the occasion of evil. They were then passing through such a time. Those who favored the law were shocked at violation of it, those who opposed it saw in the violations the best reasons for its abolition. It was at most only an ecclesiastical regulation, which had its origin and justification in circumstances that no longer existed; the good it could do was reduced to the minimum, the evil had reached its maximum. Luther, therefore, was but following the suggestions of his environment when he insisted on the marriage of the

clergy, and so gave to the churches that were to be erected by the new movement the parsonage and the tender associations connected with it.

The next thing worthy of particular notice is, that Luther saw the cruelty and futility of persecution. He said, "If the art of convincing heretics by fire were the right one, then the executioners would be the most learned Doctors on earth." And again, "Heretics should be convinced by the Scriptures, and not by the sword." It would have been well for his fame if he had never swerved from his position. He had been taught toleration by the intolerance of his enemies; unfortunately, the lesson was one that could be learned only by personal experience, and, even so, was not always well learned. His followers did not learn it at all, and the times were not ripe for its general acceptance—it was to wait for the slow working of the new forces, and changed political conditions.

A third point has reference to the Eucharist. One party held that after consecration the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper were no longer essentially bread and wine, but the very body and blood of Christ—this had been the official doctrine of the Roman Church since the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). Others were now reviving an older doctrine of the Church, that the bread and wine still remained. Luther thought that this difference need cause no division, since the needful thing was to believe that Christ is really and truly and essentially present in the bread and wine.[1] There is no danger, he said, in believing that the bread is present or not present; we must tolerate many customs and ordinances that are not injurious to the faith. In this last sentence he gave utterance to what has been called the conservative principle of the Reformation —his shrinking from the introduction of new, and from the overturning of old, customs. His was the case of a conservative by nature and training aroused and urged onward for a time into a radical policy by new and revolutionary principles.

These particulars have been mentioned in order to show more clearly the direction in which Luther was advancing. In 1518, in the "Explanation of his Theses," he wrote on thesis 89, "The Church needs reformation, but that reformation is not the business of one man, the Pope, nor of many Cardinals, but of the whole world." The "Address to the German Nobility" was in line with this thought. Rightly understood it went to the bottom of things; there was more in it than Luther saw there at the

[1] In these two parties we may see the Transubstantialists and the Consubstantionists of later time. In Transubstantiation the theory is that the substance of the bread becomes the substance of the body of Christ, the accidents remaining the same. In Consubstantiation the substance of the bread remains, and the substance of the body of Christ is superadded. In the former, there is only one substance—that of the body and blood of Christ; in the latter, two substances, of the bread and of the body.

time, or it may be afterwards, or than the world has since realized. It means that every Christian, however humble in character or position, is, in his measure, a reformer, and responsible for the purity of the Church. This is the doctrine of the Address. It is in the Church what individual political responsibility is in the State, the great democratic principle asserted (and possibly perverted) in manhood suffrage. Than this, Luther taught nothing more fundamental and nothing more antagonistic to the idea of a spiritual caste, with special powers and privileges. He held that it was the duty of the German people to reform the German Church.

Just four months after the publication of this address followed the "Babylonian Captivity of the Church."[1] It was a discussion of the sacraments. The Church had long held that there were seven sacraments, namely, baptism, the eucharist, confirmation, penance, ordination, matrimony and extreme unction. These seven Luther would reduce to three, baptism, the eucharist and penance; but even these, he thought, had been greatly perverted—led, as it were, into a Babylonian captivity. He mentioned first the eucharist: the Roman tyranny had mutilated it, had destroyed its integrity, by forbidding the cup to the laity. "I do not mean," he said, "that they commit sin who receive in only one kind, but that they sin, who, in mere arbitrariness, refuse both kinds to be given to those who wish it." The sin is not with the people, but with the priests. He would not advise that both kinds be taken by force, as if there were absolute necessity to have both; but he would instruct men's consciences, so that everyone might bear the Roman tyranny knowing that his lawful rights in the sacrament had been taken away from him on account of his sins.[2] He would have no one, however, justify the Roman tyranny, as if it were right to prohibit one kind to the laity. All should protest against it, and yet bear it, just as they would bear it if they were captives among the Turks, where they could not have either kind.

The custom of withholding the cup from the laity was of long standing; it began in the twelfth century, or earlier, following the general acceptance of the doctrine of transubstantiation. When it came to be thought that the bread became Christ's very body, and the wine his very blood, the bread and wine after consecration could not be touched by profane hands. The tender conscience was shocked by the thought that crumbs

[1] LOL, 5: 13–118; a German translation, not by Luther, is in Walch, 19: 4 *seq.* English version in Wace and Bucheim, 141–245.

[2] Luther regarded the evils that had come upon Church and State as chastisements. The Turk, the Pope, the tyranny of bishops, whatever God's people suffered, were sent or permitted on account of sins. Hence they were to be endured patiently, as coming from God.

of the bread might be dropped on the ground or floor, to be trodden under foot, or, it may be, devoured by animals. And then the wine, the blood of Christ, might be spilled. By putting the bread in the form of a wafer the first danger was greatly diminished, but how could they provide against the spilling of the blood by rough and eager lay communicants? The most effective way was not to offer it to them at all. It was acknowledged that at the original institution of the Supper, both the bread and wine were given to all, and that for centuries that custom had been continued; but it was held that, inasmuch as no one could receive the body without receiving some blood with it, whoever received the bread virtually received the blood. However, not to lose and after a while forget the original form of the sacrament, the priest was to communicate in both kinds. That is, the laity had the sacrament in its full efficacy, but in an abridged form; while the celebrating priest had it entire, in form as well as in full efficacy.

The new custom spread rapidly through the Church, until nothing else was recognized, probably before the bull of Honorius III made this the law of the Church as well as custom. No serious revolt was made against the innovation, except by certain heretical or revolutionary sects, until the time of John Hus. It was while he was at Constance, a prisoner awaiting condemnation, that the people of Prag demanded the sacrament in both kinds. In answer to this the Council of Constance passed a decree authoritatively excluding the laity from the cup. The decree is dated June 15, 1415. The following 6th of July Hus was burned.

In this we have an example of the way in which human institutions, religious or civil, are changed. There is first the coming of some new conception, changing the attitude of men to some rite or ceremony. This changed attitude suggests, seems to make necessary, some change in the form of the rite. The change is at first timidly made by the few, then by more, then by all. At first it has no expressed sanction, it is simply a custom; after a time the custom is questioned and then it is made a law. If it be an ecclesiastical custom or law, it is at first regarded as something that is, on the whole, a good and useful expedient; soon it gets to be considered a matter of supposed divine obligation, for the neglect of which men ought to be burned or States torn asunder. That this was true in the case of the exclusion of the laity from the cup, is shown by the decree of the Council of Constance.[1]

The withholding of the cup was what Luther called the first captivity of the Eucharist. The second captivity was of less importance: it was

[1] Adopted at Session XIII, June 15, 1415: *Item ipsa sancta synodus decernit et declarat . . . sub poena excommunicationis, ut effectualiter puniant eos contra hoc decretum excedentes, qui communicando populum sub utraque specie panis et vini exhortati fuerint et sic faciendum esse docuerint.* Mansi, 27: 728.

the requirement that the faithful should believe, not only that the body of Christ is essentially and truly present in the bread and wine, but also that the bread itself is not essentially present. In other words, Luther wished the people to be free to hold either transubstantiation or consubstantiation, while the Church authorities insisted that they should hold to transubstantiation alone. A third captivity of the Eucharist, and the worst of all, was the perversion of its meaning and uses. What its proper use is he explains. The mass he says, is properly nothing but the words of Christ, *Take, eat,* etc., as if he had said: "O man, thou sinner condemned, out of the simple, gratuitous love with which I love thee, the Father of mercies so willing, I promise thee, in these words, without any merit or vow on thy part, remission of all thy sins and life eternal. And that you may most fully rely on my irrevocable promise, I will give you my body and will pour out my blood, being about to confirm the promise by my death, and to leave both my body and my blood for a sign and memorial of the promise. As oft as you shall come to the Supper, remember me, declare and praise my love and kindness to you and give thanks." From which, said Luther, you see that nothing is needed for the people in the mass but faith, which relies firmly on the promise, believes that Christ is trustworthy in his words, and does not doubt that these great blessings have been given to it. When there is such faith, presently follows the sweetest affection of the heart, by which the soul is enlarged and strengthened, so that the man is drawn to Christ, the bountiful and free giver, and thus becomes a new man. This mass, which brought blessedness to faith, and was of no force where faith was not, he would substitute for the mass that was supposed to have virtue in itself, which might be bought and might avail for many things, a sort of spiritual merchandise.

Passing from the eucharist, Luther next took up the subject of baptism, which the popular Church teaching had robbed of its power. Baptism, as the other sacraments, was intended as a pledge of the faithfulness of Christ, as a guaranty that he would do whatever was promised in it. In baptism had been promised regeneration and forgiveness of sins; this promise becomes operative and efficacious to all who, in being baptized, or in afterwards recalling the fact of their baptism, believe that promise. It is not the baptism alone, or the promise alone, or the faith alone, but the baptism and the promise and the promise believed. The act of baptism occurs but once, but a man ought to be continually and always baptized by faith—that is, the efficacy of the sacrament is renewed as often as we recall it, and believe the promise of Christ made in it. This blessed use of baptism, by which the grace that we have

lost by sin is restored, had been forgotten and many other ways of remitting sin had been substituted for that one that Christ had instituted. Especially had the Church, following the lead of St. Jerome, put penance in the place of baptism, and men were required to seek through painful works of satisfaction—pilgrimages, vows, fastings—what they already had in this misunderstood and neglected sacrament. The efficacy of baptism was never lost, unless a man, in despair, should be unwilling to return to salvation; it was possible, indeed, to wander for a time away from the sign, but the sign did not on that account lose its power. And yet baptism itself justifies no one, but only faith in that word of promise to which the baptism is added.[1]

It would serve no good purpose to follow Luther through his discussion of the other alleged sacraments, which he declares to be no true sacraments; it has been the purpose to mention only those things that show his advance toward reformation. Let us look back over the way and note the steps in his progress. He had left behind him the doctrine of papal infallibility, and the exclusive right of Popes and councils to interpret the Scripture; he had made the point that every Christian is divinely taught, and that the duty of reforming the Church belongs to every Christian; and yet he held that the judgment of the Church ought to be sought in a general council to be called by Christian princes, as the representatives of the Christian people. He had given up the doctrine of clerical celibacy, and insisted on the right and expediency of the marriage of priests; he asserted the right to differ on certain speculative points about the eucharist, and he demanded the cup for the laity. His views of baptism logically excluded the sacrament of penance; and, therefore, of the three sacraments that he was willing to allow, there actually remained baptism and the Lord's supper; and these had no other efficacy than that given them by faith. They were the Gospel in symbol, and their special value consisted in the fact that they declared more specifically and impressively what the preacher declared whenever he truly preached the Gospel.[2]

These two treatises were speedily followed by a third, on the "Freedom of a Christian Man," which is devoted to the exposition of this twofold thesis: "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to

[1] *Baptismus neminem justificat, nec ulli prodest; sed fides in verbum promisionis, cui additum baptismus.*

[2] In his sermon on preparation for death (1519) Luther says: "In the sacraments, Christ, the Lord your God, speaks with you, through the priest. You ought not to feel that the work or the word which you hear is man's. For God himself promises you all things through that word, which we have spoken of Christ. And he wished the sacraments to be pledges of his fidelity," etc. LOL, 3: 465.

everyone."[1] A man becomes justified, free and a true Christian, says Luther, through the word of God. The soul can do without everything, except the word of God, without which none of its wants are provided for. But, having the word, it is rich and wants for nothing; since that is the word of life, of truth, of light, of peace, of justification, of salvation, of joy, of liberty, of wisdom, of virtue, of grace, of glory, and of every good thing. As the soul needs the word alone for life and justification, so it is justified by faith alone and not by any works. By no outward work or labor can the inward man be at all justified, made free and saved. A right faith in Christ is an incomparable treasure, and suffices for everything. But if he has no need of works, neither has he any need of the law—the law is not made for a righteous man. This is Christian liberty, not that one should be careless and lead a bad life, but that no one should need the law or works for justification and salvation. Faith unites the soul to Christ, as the wife to the husband, so that whatever Christ possesses the believing soul may take to itself and boast of as its own. His kingly and priestly dignities are thus imparted and communicated to every believer—we are kings and the freest of all men, but also priests forever, worthy to appear before God, to pray for others and to teach one another mutually the things that are of God.

But the man justified and made free by faith still remains in this mortal life upon earth; hence he cannot take his ease, but must do good works, out of disinterested love to the service of God. Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works. We do not then reject good works; nay, we embrace them and teach them in the highest degree. Though the justified man is free from all good works, yet he ought to empty himself of this liberty, take on himself the form of a servant, be found in fashion as a man, serve, help and in every way act toward his neighbor, as he sees that God through Christ has acted and is acting toward him. I will therefore give myself, as a sort of Christ, to my neighbor, as Christ has given himself to me. A Christian man does not live in himself, but in Christ and his neighbor, else he is no Christian: in Christ by faith, in his neighbor by love.

Many, says Luther in conclusion, when they hear of this liberty of faith, turn it into an occasion of license—they show themselves free men and Christians only by contempt and reprehension of ceremonies, of traditions, of human laws; as if they were Christians merely because they eat flesh when others fast. The Christian must walk in the middle

[1] It is characteristic of Luther that he appeals, for proof of the truth of this paradox, not to Jesus, who first taught it, but to Paul, 1 Cor. 9: 19; Rom. 13: 8. He quotes profusely from the Scriptures throughout the discussion, but of sixty-five direct citations, only twelve are from the Gospels, while forty-two are from the Pauline epistles and Hebrews, and eleven are from the Old Testament.

path. We do not contemn ceremonies, but contemn the belief in works.

In this treatise,[1] which has been scrupulously summarized in his very words, Luther for the first time set forth distinctly, in a writing for popular instruction, what afterwards came to be known as the formal and the material principles of the Reformation. The formal principle is the office of the Scriptures, as the supreme authority in religion and the means by which the faith of the believer is wrought. The material principle is the justification of the believer through faith in the promises of God, grounded on the merits of Christ, and not through his own good works. It is sometimes asserted that the formal principle was an afterthought on Luther's part: that he began his work as a reformer with assertion of the material principle, justification by faith, and was driven to the adoption of the formal principle in the course of his debate with Eck at Leipzig, after having vainly attempted to justify his teachings from the writings of the Fathers. But this cannot be said to be a fair deduction from the facts. The explicit statement of the supreme authority of the Scriptures is found as early as the reply to Prierias,[2] and the principle is certainly implicit, though not formally asserted, in the Theses.

Of all the writings that the Reformation produced, there is none that shows deeper penetration into the meaning of the Gospel than this treatise on Christian liberty—none that is more tender, spiritual, edifying. It shows us a side of Luther's character that we shall too seldom see as we pursue our theme, and that we shall therefore do well frequently to recall. At his best, by virtue of his mystical tendency, he was capable of understanding the profoundest, the loftiest, the subtlest teachings of Jesus and Paul, and of setting them forth with a simplicity, clearness, emphasis and raciness that no other writer of his generation ever approached. It is true that he was far more influenced by Paul than by Jesus, but in this case that fact is without significance, for in this case Jesus and Paul are at one. As a summary of the fundamental principles of the Gospel, nothing in the whole range of Christian literature surpasses it. It is one of the imperishable treasures of our faith.

These three treatises have been called by some "Luther's three classics," by others the "primary works" of the Reformation. They are the most important of all his writings, and set forth principles from which he never afterwards departed, save in minor details. They were written before he had formally broken with the Papacy and before he had become the recognized leader of a sect or party. They therefore indicate the trend of his freely developing thoughts, and what he taught

[1] *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen.* Walch, 19: 986 *seq.*; LDS, 27: 173 *seq.*; LOL, 4: 206 *seq.* Luther's letter to the Pope, De Wette, 1: 497. English version of both, Wace and Bucheim, 95–137.

[2] It is the second of his *fundamenta.* LOL, 2: 7.

in them became, with no material alteration or addition, a constituent part of developed Protestantism. If there is any exception to this sweeping statement, it is in relation to Luther's later ideas regarding faith and the sacraments. It happened with him as it often happens with reformers: he early saw many things clearly in themselves, but he did not at first see clearly their relations to other things; so that he was in the end compelled to modify and reshape his new convictions, to make them fit parts of the old system that he retained. In some cases he did not see the whole truth; in other cases he saw the truth, but painfully realized that he was forced to do, not what was ideally best, but what was only best in the circumstances. In judging him at this distance, and with fuller light, we have need of caution and charity: we see the truth more clearly than he saw it, but his difficulties we see dimly, or not at all.

These earlier writings of Luther, with their fervid eloquence, came from a brain and conscience fired by an elemental passion for truth and liberty of the spirit. He had yet to learn his trade as practical reformer. We shall find a great contrast, in some respects, between these writings and those of his later years, when experience had taught him wisdom, or at least caution. In his first assault on Rome, in the name of freedom and pure spirituality, and the inner uplift thus given to men, Luther began a work that promised to revolutionize the world. In his practical embodiment of his ideas in religious institutions he was led by the irresistible logic of events and necessity to a championship of authority and of the letter, that brought Protestantism again under the dominion of the very way of thinking from which it had sought emancipation. But for the present nothing of this appears. Luther stands in the year 1520 as the rebel against all outward authority in religion, the asserter of the utmost liberty of the individual soul in the things of the spirit, the advocate of the original principles of the Christian evangel. Most of the pre-Lutheran demands for reform were like the first step of his own: a demand for the abolition of certain abuses. But there were a few who saw deeper, and knew that the real ground of the corruptions of the Church was its perversion of the simple primitive Gospel of salvation by faith in Christ into the complicated system of sacramental grace and priestly hierarchy known as the Roman Catholic Church; and who knew, therefore, that the only reform capable of truly reforming anything was a return to the doctrine and practice of the apostles. This was now becoming clear to Luther, and as it became clear to him he was proclaiming it to all Germany—indeed, to all Europe. But would he be any more successful in realizing this ideal than those who had preceded him? This was a question that only time could answer.

While he was taking his position of decided opposition to Rome, the

papal court had already decided its course toward Luther. The "Address to the German Nobility" was published in June; on the 15th of the same month, the decree of excommunication was passed in Consistory. This result was brought about largely by the influence of Eck and Cajetan. It must have come; it could not have been much longer delayed, certainly not after the publication of the "Address," which was no uncertain declaration of war; but it was due to the representations of Eck and Cajetan that it came when it did. They saw clearly, and made the papal court see, that further delay was useless—the Pope must crush Luther or confess that he was himself in the wrong. Leo was pushed on by that calm, resistless sequence of events which we call the logic of consequences; he had gone so far that he must go farther. He is represented as repenting that he had ever had anything to do with the affair, that he had not left the monks to fight out their own battles and settle their own disputes; especially did he repent that he had issued the Brief on indulgences.[1] His repentance came too late. It was not cautious men, fearing to advance, but excited partisans who impatiently blamed his hesitation, that were uttering the voice of destiny. Nothing was clearer than that the bull ought to be issued at once, but whether it would be any remedy for the evils threatening was an entirely different thing. At length the draft prepared by Cardinal Pietro Acolti was accepted and published.[2]

Considerable pains were taken with the composition of this document, not only to set forth a sufficient justification for the condemnation of Luther, but to give it a strong flavor of Scripture as well as to make it a good specimen of what was reckoned elegant latinity by the Italian Humanists. The exordium, in particular, was much admired in papal circles as a fine example of sacred eloquence. It began with a quotation from Psalm 74:22 (from the Vulgate, of course), "Arise O Lord, and judge thy cause; be mindful of thy reproaches, with which the foolish reproach thee daily," and proceeded with a like invocation of Peter, Paul and the whole congregation of the saints. The Pope then tells how he has been distressed by the teachers of false doctrines, especially in Germany, for which country he and his predecessors had always entertained the highest affection, and cites forty-one propositions from the writings

[1] "Leo repented himself of whatsoever he had done in these occurrences, and most of all of the Bull of indulgences sent into Germany, thinking it would have been better to let the Friars dispute among themselves, and to keep himself neutral and reverenced by both parties, than by declaring himself for one to constrain the other to alienate themselves from him." Sarpi, p. 9.

[2] The original text of the bull *Exsurge Domini*, is printed in LOL, 2: 259, Gerdesius, *Historia Reformationis, Monumenta*, 1: 129 *seq.*; Raynaldus, 12: 289 *seq.*; Schaff, 6: 233 *seq.* A German version by Hutten with notes and postscript, is in Walch, 15: 1427 *seq.*; and an English version may be found in Jacobs, Appendix.

of Luther, prohibiting any and all to teach or defend them, as "heretical or scandalous or false or offensive to pious ears or seductive to simple minds and opposed to Catholic truth." Luther's books, as containing these errors, are condemned, the faithful are forbidden to read them, and they are to be publicly burned. The Pope recounts his repeated attempts to recall Luther from his errors, and exhorts him and his followers yet to repent and return to the bosom of the Church, granting them sixty days to recant—failing which, they are to be condemned as heretics and handed over to the secular arm for punishment. All ecclesiastics, especially those in Germany, are commanded to announce these censures in the churches, on pain of themselves incurring like penalty; and all who should hinder the publication of the bull should be *ipso facto* excommunicate. Copies of the bull should be posted on the doors of the Cathedrals of Brandenburg, Meissen and Merseburg, that Luther and his followers might not plead ignorance.

The bull had been expected by all, wished for by some and dreaded by many. There had been extravagant notions of what would be the effect of it, and in Catholic circles there was general disappointment at its effect. Luther had begun his work as reformer with no idea of leaving the Roman Church, the Church of his fathers, his own Church. He did not leave the Church—he was thrust out. Finding himself in this plight, his teachings rejected, himself under the ban, he could do one of two things: abandon all that he had held to be truth and abjectly sue for pardon and restoration, with a promise to remain forever silent, or accept the situation, and proceed to live his life and do his work. Of course he chose the latter. The former course would have been too base and pusillanimous for even Erasmus. And so, instead of closing the controversy and restoring the peace and unity of the Church, the bull proved to be the needful condition for the further development of the Lutheran revolt. The first and most obvious effect was to make it certain that the contest must go on. Luther was already committed; there was no possibility of honorable or safe retreat for him; and the bull committed the Pope in the same way. Before there was controversy, there must now be collision.

Before the actual experiment, no one could tell how much danger Luther would be in from his condemnation by the papal court. It had been little more than twenty years since Savonarola had been excommunicated by Alexander VI, and the end of that conflict was that the reformer was burned. It might have been inferred that a similar fate awaited the excommunicated Luther, and there was at least enough uncertainty in the case to cause him and his friends grave anxiety. Neither his friends nor his enemies were then in a condition to realize

how different the conditions were in Germany from those in Florence when the bold preacher went down in his contest with the Papacy, nor could they tell how far Europe had advanced in its movement away from medieval conceptions. A bull of excommunication had once been final, about as absolute and compelling as an imperial edict of Augustus or Tiberias. But it was now to be demonstrated that the time of such absolute supremacy had passed. The change had been brought about by the gradual working of unnoticed or unconsidered causes.

In the first place, the conduct of the Popes themselves had had much to do with it. The reverence and obedience given them was due to the fact that as the head and representative of the Church a Pope spoke for Christ and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So speaking, he must speak wisely and justly. Condemnation carried with it the loss of spiritual privileges on earth and exclusion from heaven hereafter; it touched all that was dearest in the life and hopes of man; and in proportion to its awfulness it ought to be reluctantly and carefully spoken. To condemn thoughtlessly or from prejudice, or to accomplish political or personal or party ends, was cruelty and outrage—it was to use the power of the highest and holiest in the interests of injustice and oppression. This was what the Popes had not infrequently done, and every unjust bull of excommunication was treasured up in the memory of men against the Popes and the Papacy. Some thought that Savonarola had died rather for his fidelity to truth than for heresy, and it was beginning to be believed that Hus and Jerome of Prag, notwithstanding their condemnation by Pope and council, were very good, sincere Christians. Even if they had taught errors, they were not errors worthy of death, and when Popes used their power for the destruction of good men, there must be something wrong about it.

But even if the Popes had always acted with due consideration and from the holiest of motives, they could not have maintained their power. They had been lifted up to their place of eminence by the working of general causes, and they were being lowered by the working of forces independent of and outside themselves. Christian Europe had long been compelled to act as a unit. It had to maintain a death struggle with the enemies by which it was surrounded, barbarism and heathenism on the North and East, and Mohammedanism in the East and South. There were only two great parties, Christian and infidel. Christendom was held together by a common danger no less than by a common faith. There had been local and national jealousies and antagonisms, but they were held in abeyance by the fear of enemies from without. The one great pressing necessity among Christian peoples was unity. There was one civil head, the Emperor, and one head of the Church, the Pope;

but the especial representative of Christian unity was the Pope. When Christendom became powerful and its enemies on all sides were changed to friends or ceased to be so greatly feared, the outside pressure relaxed, the necessity for unity was diminished, and room was made for the growth of national interests and a national spirit. As unity was no longer the principal interest, the Pope lost something of his importance; and the loss was greater and more marked when, from any cause, the Pope favored one nation against another. From 1309 to 1377, the Papacy held its seat at Avignon and was under the domination of France. During part of that time England and France were at war with each other; England could not yield a cheerful obedience to a Pope controlled by the enemy. From 1378 to 1409 there were two Popes, one at Avignon and the other at Rome. The nations in sympathy with France obeyed the French Pope, those opposed to France sided with the Pope at Rome. The division was according to national affinities; and this assertion of national spirit, occasioned by temporary conditions, was prophetic. It was an intimation that, when conditions of antagonism should be permanent, there would be a permanent weakening, and at last the utter exhaustion, of the conception of one holy Christian Empire, in spiritual subjection to the Pope as the vicar of Christ. As time went on, the necessity for unity became progressively lost, and the national spirit progressively stronger—it came to be universal; it took possession even of the Papacy, which aspired to be a secular power. The Pope was the head of the Church, and also an Italian prince; and the problem to be solved was whether men could be in subjection to the Pope as the vicar of Christ and at the same time make war upon him as a national ruler.

Much has been said of the growth in Europe of the secular spirit in opposition to the ecclesiastical, and of the great consequences following it. The conditions for the growth of that spirit have been indicated above. In the time of Charlemagne and Otho and the Holy Roman Empire, such a spirit would have been unnatural and ruinous—it would have made the Europe and the civilization of to-day impossible. Divided and mutually hostile Christian States would have been an easy prey to fierce Moslems and fiercer Hungarians. But in the beginning of the sixteenth century, nations might indulge their national jealousies and yet survive. Accordingly, there was then a bitter national rivalry; the national spirit was intense. It was strong in England and in France, but strongest in the peoples that were brought into close relations by their connection with the Empire. The pride of blood, the desire for local self-government, especially resented any domination from without. The Italians hated the Germans, the Germans hated the Italians; and both hated the Spaniards, the great, aggressive, conquering people of the

time. The cultured Italians, shining in the light of the Renaissance, spoke contemptuously of the "stupid, drunken Germans." The Germans retaliated with "lying, avaricious, extortionate Italians"; with all people it was the "cold, proud, domineering Spaniard." In the midst of such pronounced race jealousies, it would have been difficult for any Pope, however prudent and impartial, to command the confidence of all; national prejudices were stronger than ecclesiastical allegiance. These prejudices the national spirit and antagonism had rapidly developed since the days of Savonarola, and they were never stronger than in the first half of the sixteenth century.

A strong national spirit was but one of the characteristics of the times. The widespread revolt against the reign of authority was another; this weakened the force of all established institutions. The right of men to think for themselves was emphasized, and had been pushed so far as to lead to the questioning of the foundations of Christianity itself. Everything must be subjected to the test of reason; the sanction of custom counted but little; was the custom itself well-grounded? Men asked, Does the Pope have authority to issue any bull of excommunication? And, if he has, was this particular bull rightly issued? There was no clear answer to the first question, and the second appealed to the judgment of the people. There was no tribunal universally recognized to give that judgment: some looked to the papal court, some to a general council, some would submit to neither. As, in the unsettled state of things, a papal bull must submit itself to questioning, its execution was by no means a matter of course.

This is the state of things as it appears to us looking back upon it; at the time it did not seem so plain. First of all, Luther himself could not be certain as to what fate awaited him, or what course it might be best for him to pursue. Some thought that he might temporize, seek a suspension of the sentence, possibly a withdrawal. Charles von Miltitz came forth again as conciliator and peacemaker. In his previous negotiations he had not been conspicuously successful; his efforts had, at best, only postponed the catastrophe, and this chiefly by favoring circumstances; but he was one of those men who cannot be discouraged by failure or difficulties. When everyone else saw that he was accomplishing little, he thought that the whole matter was about to be adjusted—he was a diplomatist, and what might not be accomplished by diplomacy? Even he saw that the case had been complicated and made more difficult by the bull of excommunication, but he did not despair. He was not a man of abundant or varied resources: he would try the same plans that he had already tried—that is, he would induce Luther to write another letter to the Pope. The new thing that Luther was to say was,

that he had never said or done anything against Leo personally; and he was to repeat the promise that he would be silent, if the other side was silent. At the same time, the Elector Frederick was to second the movement, by thanking the Pope for the golden rose and otherwise showing good will. The meeting between Miltitz and Luther took place at Lichtenberg, and the plan was agreed upon on October 11th. Luther had already seen the bull, but that the letter might not seem to have been forced from him by the Pope's action, it was dated September 6th. Luther wrote to Spalatin that he had no difficulty in saying what Miltitz asked him to say, because it was true; he would write without delay. If, said he, it shall turn out as we hope, well; if otherwise, it will still be well. We scarcely know how to interpret Luther's deliberate and confidentially expressed opinions in this matter. It may help to remember that it was an age of diplomacy, and that diplomacy meant deception. As men used deception so habitually in dealing with their enemies, they easily used it in dealing with friends, or even with themselves. To antedate a letter for a purpose was at least diplomatic; to make a statement to the Pope that he would understand in one way and Luther in another was also diplomatic. So far as this piece of diplomacy was concerned, it was not creditable to either the judgment or the morals of the parties engaged in it. It was not merely discreditable, it was ridiculous: there was the willingness to deceive, but not the ability. But whatever Luther in his simplicity might have been willing to do, there was no deception or ambiguity in what he actually did.[1]

He wrote, in all, three letters to the Pope: two of these we have already considered, and in both he was sufficiently humble; indeed, to us who have never known the awe-inspiring influence of high rank and office, he appears almost abject in his self-abasement and humiliation. The third letter is of a different sort. It is a very remarkable letter; everything about it is noteworthy. The salutation makes us pause: "Martin Luther to Leo X, bishop of Rome, sends greeting in Jesus Christ." Among the monsters of the age with whom he had been making war he had been forced to think of Leo, because the notion had gotten abroad that he was making war upon the Pope personally. He had indeed been compelled to appeal from him to a general council, but he had never been so far alienated from the Pope himself as not to be able to pray God's blessing upon him. He could almost despise and triumph over his enemies who strove to frighten him by the greatness of the Pope's name. He was not prompted by fear to write; he sought to free himself from the unjust charge of attacking the Pope in person. So far from this being true, he had never spoken of the Pope except in

[1] De Wette, 1:497 *seq.*; Wace and Bucheim, 95 *seq.*

the highest terms. He had called him Daniel in Babylon. He was not such a simpleton as to attack a man whom everybody was praising—nay, he did not even abuse those whom everyone was abusing; he was so conscious of his own sin that he could not cast the first stone. It was not the morals of men that concerned him, but their impious and hurtful doctrines that he spoke against. In this he followed the example of Christ and the apostles, and could not change. He justified his sharpness: of what use is salt if it does not smart, or of the sword if it does not cut? Cursed be he who does the Lord's work slightly.

He said nothing against the Pope's private character. "But," said he, "that See of yours, which is called the Roman Curia, is more corrupt than any Babylon, and neither you nor anyone else can deny it." He had detested its impiety and been impatient that the people had been deceived by the false use that had been made of the Pope's name and of the Roman Church. He knew that the evils of Rome were too great to be corrected by one man; he did not attempt to reform it, but only to render it as little hurtful as possible. It grieved him that the Church "formerly the holiest of all had become the most licentious of robbers, the kingdom of sin, of death, of hell." In the universal corruption, the Pope was helpless. He was like a lamb among wolves, like Daniel among the lions, like Ezekiel dwelling among the scorpions; what could he, one alone, do among these monsters? What could three or four learned and holy Cardinals do? The Roman Curia was on trial, and the wrath of God was coming upon it to the end. His only feeling toward the Pope was one of pity, and sorrow that he should be Pope in such an age; he was worthy of better times. Men boasted of the Pope's glory, which was no glory at all. He wished that the Pope might lay it aside and live as a private priest on his ancestral estate. "For what," said he, "O Leo, dost thou do in the Curia, except that the more wicked and execrable a man is, the more he uses thy name for destroying the riches and souls of men; for multiplying crime, for crushing out faith and truth, and opposing the whole Church of God. Is it not true that under the whole heavens there is nothing more corrupt, pestilential and hateful than the Roman Curia?" In making war upon it he was doing the Pope service.

And yet, it was not his fault that he had attacked the corruptions of Rome; he had not thought of doing so; but Satan opened his eyes and beheld his servant, John Eck, the great adversary of Christ, and stirred him up to drag him into the arena and force upon him the discussion of the primacy of the Roman Church. He blamed Cajetan, who might have stopped the controversy and did not do it, and Eck who renewed it. He praised Miltitz, whose efforts were not supported. This Mil-

titz, now for the third time, was making an effort for peace, and therefore, he said: "I come, most blessed father, and even prostrate beg of you, if possible, to lay your hand upon your flatterers, who are the enemies of peace which they pretend to seek, and restrain them." He could not recant; that would add to the confusion; and he could not consent that the word of God should be bound. But except these two things, he would consent to anything for peace—he hated strife.

This is the substance of Luther's long, bold, eloquent letter. The spirit is indicated by this summary, but we are not yet in a position to feel its significance. We must take notice more particularly of the way in which the miner's son speaks to the son of the proudest house in Italy—the Augustinian monk to the head of the Church militant. He calls him "the most blessed father Leo," "excellent Leo," "my father Leo," "Leo," and, descending to the utmost familiarity, "my dear Leo," using just such terms as he might have used in addressing any bishop, or even any friend. This was not done in simple coarseness and vulgarity; it was done with a purpose. What that purpose was may be estimated by another thing: Luther twice quoted in his letter from St. Bernard's work *De Consideratione*, addressed to Pope Eugenius III. These two things, his mode of address and his referring to St. Bernard, taken together, indicate his conception of his relation to the Pope. It was a position of substantial equality; each was the leader of a party; they might well treat on equal terms. In mentioning St. Bernard, he could not forget the position of that great man, as the teacher and guide of Europe; and he was already beginning to feel that what Bernard was in the twelfth century he was coming to be in the sixteenth. Bernard had taken upon himself to instruct Eugenius how to conduct himself in his great office, and Eugenius had submitted to be instructed. In the same way, Luther, who had been providentially lifted into a place of the greatest distinction, might not deem it presumptuous to admonish the reigning Pope. He expressly calls himself the imitator of Bernard.[1]

If we ask ourselves what Luther hoped to accomplish by his letter, we have to remember that he had already seen the bull of excommunication. He could hardly expect to induce the Pope to recall the bull. Still less could he hope to bring the Pope over to his side and engage him in the work of overturning the papal see. Most likely he intended to do what he himself intimates—show the world that the contest was not with the Pope as a man, but with the Pope as an official, and in particular

[1] "Perhaps I may seem impudent in attempting to teach so great a person by whom all should be taught, and as your flatterers boast, from whom the thrones of judges receive their sentence; but I imitate St. Bernard in his book 'On Consideration,' which every Pope ought to know by heart."

with the Roman Curia, which any Pope was able to control only in part.

This letter was a secret and unacknowledged effect of the bull; it was necessary that Luther should notice it in some public, definite, positive way. It had reached him on October 6th, Eck having sent it to the university of Wittenberg, accompanied by a letter dated at Leipzig, October 3rd; it was not convenient, possible or safe to deliver it in person. Eck intimated that in sending it he was performing a disagreeable and unwilling service, and yet he said, "I beg and beseech you by our Saviour, to have the bull so executed that none of the condemned articles shall be publicly held or taught by anyone under the authority of the university." If this should not be done, all privileges granted the university by the papal see would be withdrawn. Acting under the authority of his commission he had, he said, extended the condemnation to Carlstadt and Dolscius, as well as to Martin. The whole matter was considered by the members of the university, including Luther and the other condemned persons. It was decided that the bull was not sufficiently authenticated; it was not accompanied by a letter from the Pope; and the work of the university went on just as if the condemnation had never been received. Luther himself tried one of his old tricks: he professed to look upon it as a forgery, and spoke of it as "the new Eckish bulls and lies." Afterwards (November 4th) he treated it more seriously and published a tract "Against the Execrable Bull of Antichrist"; and on the 17th of November he renewed his appeal to a general council. He appealed from the Pope as "a tyrannical judge, rash and unjust; as an enemy, an Antichrist, an adversary and oppressor of the Holy Scripture; and as a despiser, calumniator and blasphemer of the Holy Christian Church." In one short month he had forgotten that Leo X was a Daniel in the lion's den, an Ezekiel dwelling among the scorpions!

Wittenberg was not the only place where the bull met with little response. There were three parties in Germany: the pronounced Lutherans, the moderate middle party, and the papists—the "Eckian faction," as it was contemptuously called. The bull met with opposition, neglect or favor, just as it chanced to come into a place where anyone of these parties predominated; and in the whole affair there was room for the influence of certain incidental things, that, at particular junctures, seem to take a kind of pleasure in working for a rising and against a sinking cause. When public opinion is not decided, when the balances are vibrating, hesitating and doubtful as to which side shall go up, these come in, as if in pure arbitrariness, and tilt the trembling scale. There was no doubt as to the general trend of opinion: it was toward

Luther and away from the Pope; but in the case of individuals and particular places there was a nice balancing of inclination. It was in itself a matter of little significance who should bring the bull into Germany; ordinarily it would make no difference; but at that particular time it was unfortunate for the Papacy that some one else was not chosen for that service. Eck was unpopular; he had made enemies by his conduct at Leipzig and afterwards, and those who hated him might easily hate the bull for his sake. His position was not enviable; he made enemies for the bull and the bull made enemies for him. Then there were some things about the bull itself that furnished occasion for criticism. Some thought it was not in proper form; some objected to the literary style of it; the sentences were too long and involved; in one case there were four hundred words between the nominative case and its verb! Some objected that forty-one of Luther's propositions were condemned as heretical, scandalous, offensive to hearer's ears, etc., but that no designation had been made of the class to which any one proposition belonged.[1] These objections had nothing whatever to do with the main question as to whether Luther was a heretic and his condemnation just; they were trivial and captious, but when men are doubtful whether a thing ought to be done at all, they are overnice as to the manner of doing it; and so little a thing as the construction of a sentence in the papal bull made for Luther and against the Pope. These little things were the chaff on the surface, indicating the direction of the tide.

It soon became evident that the issuing of the bull was by no means the last act in the "tragedy." Men were anxious, excited, indignant, expectant, but little was done. The bull was published with difficulty at Leipzig, where Eck thought his life was in danger. Even at Ingolstadt its publication was delayed; at Erfurt the students tore it in pieces and cast the fragments in the river.[2] Hutten published it with bitter comments, and urged violent opposition to it. In the meantime, no one had attempted to arrest Luther; he was still teaching, preaching, writing, publishing, as vigorously as ever, even more vigorously. Whatever notions men might have of the prerogative of the Pope, they saw that without popular support he was powerless. A little while before all eyes were turned to Rome; but now the Pope had spoken; he had exhausted his resources; nothing more was expected of him; men turned to the Emperor and the States of Germany.

[1] These criticisms are mentioned, along with others not more important, by Sarpi, under the year 1520.

[2] They made a bad pun about it: since it is a bubble (*bulla*) let it float.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIET OF WORMS

It was more than a year after his election before Charles V found it convenient to visit his new dominions. He was to meet the electors at Aachen, October 6, 1520, and be crowned king of Germany. On his very first appearance in Germany he had an opportunity to indicate something of his character. The plague was raging at Aachen and the Electors suggested that some other place should be substituted. No; the Golden Bull required that the coronation should take place at Aachen, and the law must be obeyed.[1] In our day a meeting of a Congress of the Nations could assemble at precisely the hour appointed; in that time of laborious and uncertain travel it occasioned no remark and produced no ill feeling that the meeting appointed for the 6th did not take place until the 21st of the month. On that day the Electors reached Aachen. The next day they went out to meet the Emperor, and with them a splendid escort of sixteen hundred horsemen, besides archers and lancers. The Emperor met them with two thousand horse, "all bravely clothed." The whole company, increased by the four hundred horse of the Duke of Cleves, entered the city after nightfall. It was pronounced the finest cavalcade ever seen in Germany.

The ceremony of coronation was splendid and imposing; it took place in the Church of Our Lady, and might almost be described as a long act of worship. When the Emperor was seated on the throne, richly overlaid with gold, the Archbishop of Cologne, in the midst of a solemn mass, turned to him and asked him if he would keep the Catholic faith, defend the Church, administer justice and maintain the dignity of the Empire, protect widows and the fatherless and other distressed persons, and whether he would give due honor to the bishop of Rome? The last question and the first are those that particularly concern us: the Emperor was sworn to give due honor to the Pope and to keep the Catholic faith. There was given him a sword, a ring was put on his finger, he was clothed with imperial vestments; and then the archbishops of Mainz, Cologne and Trier put the crown on his head. There were masses and prayers

[1] The people of Aachen opposed the change for a different reason: they had made great preparations, and they did not wish to lose their labor and the opportunity for display. The feast was prepared, the wedding must go on.

and music and congratulations; and the conferring of knighthood by the Emperor, and feasting and wine.[1] When all the ceremonies and feastings were ended, the Archbishop of Mainz announced that the Pope confirmed the election and commanded that henceforth Charles should be called Emperor. The Electors left the city, and about November 1st the Emperor sent out letters summoning the Diet to meet at Worms on January 6th.

There were present at the coronation two representatives of the Pope. Of these Jerome Aleander was the more important, as to him, with Eck, had been committed the publication and execution of the bull of excommunication against Luther. The Emperor was urged to execute the bull at once, but there was a difficulty: the Elector of Saxony would not consent. To him Aleander therefore addressed himself. He demanded two things: that the Elector should have Luther's books burned, and either execute Luther himself or send him a prisoner to Rome. The motive urged was that it was the duty of the Emperor and all the Electoral princes of the Empire to see the Pope's bull executed. In this Aleander was right; such was the law of the Empire, or a custom tantamount to law; and for years princes had acknowledged that duty. But as it was a very important matter, the Elector asked for time to consider. After consideration (November 4th) he answered very much as he had recently answered the Pope through his ambassador at Rome, and very much as he had answered all along. He was surprised that the Pope should demand such a service of him; he was not unmindful of the glory of his ancestors (who were always referred to as special defenders of the Church) and he would do his duty to the Empire and the Church. He mentioned that Eck had recently, and in his absence, given trouble to Luther and other honored men in his dominions; that he resented very much as an impertinent interference with his business. As to what Luther had done since the bull was received, he was conveniently ignorant—he did not know. He told what he had already done in the case: that Luther was still willing to be convinced; that it did not appear to the Emperor or to any magistrate that Luther's books contained heresy; that good and honored men thought them true and useful. He wished Luther to have a safe-conduct, and the whole matter to be debated lovingly and quietly. If Luther should be refuted by Scripture and solid argument, he would not countenance him. In the meantime the Pope ought not to require anything of him that he could not honorably do. He would not command Luther's books to be burned.[2]

[1] An elaborate account of the coronation of Charles is given by Sleidan, p. 37 *seq.*
[2] Walch, 15: 1612.

In this whole matter the Elector ignored the bull of excommunication; he treated it as if it did not exist, or as if it were of no force or significance; he required Luther to be condemned by competent, impartial judges, who were to form their judgment according to Scripture and sound reason. On the other hand, Aleander claimed that the case had already been decided; the Pope had declared Luther a heretic, and it was injurious and rebellious to question the justice of the Pope's decision. The Emperor was rather inclined to hold with the Elector, in thinking that the bull was not final.

The Elector did not need anything to confirm him in the course that he had from the first pursued. His friendship for Luther was already reinforced by a feeling of irritation at the persistency of the Pope and the impudence of some of his party; but at such a time he could not be indifferent to the opinions of learned men. Erasmus again came to his help. When the Elector wished to know of him what he thought of Luther's case, he replied, "Luther has committed two sins: he has touched the Pope's crown and the monks' bellies."[1] At the same time he gave to Spalatin some notes expressing a more serious opinion. He thought the source of the trouble was hatred of learning and the lust of power. The bull was too severe; it offended all good men and was unworthy of the Vicar of Christ. Those who had written against Luther were condemned by theologians not otherwise favorable to Luther. Luther seemed to all fair-minded men to seek what was reasonable when he offered to dispute publicly and to submit himself to impartial, unsuspected judges. He expressed himself to the same effect in a letter which he wrote about this time to certain high officials, civil and ecclesiastical, who had asked his opinion. He, too, was on the side of the Elector—he did not accept the bull as a final or suitable judgment in Luther's case.

In the position of affairs, the Pope's party must make the first move. Luther's friends could remain quiet; they had nothing to do; they could wait until Luther had been fairly tried, or for a general council, to which Luther had a second time appealed,[2] and which many of both parties felt to be necessary. On the other hand, his enemies were compelled to act, or confess themselves defeated; the bull required something to be done. Accordingly, the Pope insisted on action, and when Aleander found that he could not persuade the Elector to carry out the Pope's wishes, he undertook to have it done himself. The universities of Cologne and Louvain, that had already taken part in the controversy on the papal side, gave yet further proof of their zeal and devotion by committing all of Luther's books to the flames. The Emperor was then

[1] *Lutherus peccavit in duobus, nempe, quod tetigit coronam Pontificis, et ventres monachorum.* December 5, 1520. Spalatin, p. 29.

[2] Walch, 15: 1602.

at Cologne. At Mainz also Luther's books were burned. There was no organized opposition to this proceeding, but the multitude was with Luther, and his cause gained there more than it lost by this action of the authorities.

What was done at Cologne and Louvain and Mainz suggested what might also be done at Wittenberg. Luther had already taught that the humblest Christian had as much right to judge the Pope as the Pope had to judge him. It followed that if the Pope could condemn his writings, he might also condemn the Pope's, and the vain expedient of burning books—vain in the age of the printing-press—might be used by one party as well as by the other. Early on the morning of Monday, December 30th, a notice was posted at the university:

> All friends of evangelical truth are invited to assemble, about nine o'clock, at the church of the Holy Cross, beyond the city wall. There, according to ancient, apostolic usage, the godless books of the papal constitutions and the scholastic theology will be burned, inasmuch as the presumption of the enemies of the Gospel has advanced to such a degree that they have cast the godly, evangelical books of Luther into the fire. Let all earnest students, therefore, appear at the spectacle; for it is now the time when Antichrist must be exposed.

There were then nearly a thousand students at the university, and they, together with many townsmen, turned out to witness the promised spectacle. Near the church named in the notice was an open square, and during the recent visitation of the plague it had been the custom to burn there infected clothing and other articles. Here a pyre was built. Luther, dressed in the robes of a doctor of theology, solemnly placed on this pyre a number of books, including the Decretals, on which impudent forgeries the power of the Papacy had been built up, and the Canon Law, by which its authority was chiefly supported. A master of arts of the university came forward and lighted the fire; and when the pyre was well ablaze Luther threw into the flames the Pope's bull, saying in a loud voice, "Because thou dost trouble the holy one of the Lord, may eternal fire consume thee."

In a book that many who read these words have doubtless enjoyed, "The Schönberg-Cotta Family," after an account of this scene, it is added: "Not a word broke the silence, until the last crackle of these symbolical flames had ceased, and then gravely but joyfully we returned to our homes." But just the contrary was what really happened. Those who have seen several thousand college students in New York or Philadelphia celebrating a football victory, can imagine pretty well what was done. Doctor Luther and some of the sober citizens very

likely returned home "gravely but joyfully," but as soon as their backs were turned the students took the occasion in hand; and students of the sixteenth century were very much like those of the twentieth. First, they gathered about the pyre and sang dirges and danced while the books were being consumed. Then it occurred to them that it was a pity to have only one bonfire, where material was so abundant; so they scoured the city for books written by Luther's opponents and finally collected a wagonful. These they brought to the square, where they were burned with all the fantastic exercises that the ingenuity of the students could suggest. So uproarious were the demonstrations, that on the following day when he delivered his university lecture, Luther felt constrained to administer a public rebuke.[1]

For to him, and to all who realized the gravity of the occasion, this was no frolic, but a solemn religious ceremony, and at the same time an unmistakable declaration of war against the most formidable power then in existence. It was an announcement to the world that the Reformation could not be stopped, indeed, that it must go much farther. All that has been said, and all that remains to say, about some of the faults of Luther, is true—his violence, his dogmatism, his total inability to practice self-restraint, his intolerance of any opposition: these things may be read on every page of his writings from this time on, and there have been more than hints of them in what he wrote before this date. But these are the defects of his qualities; a less bold, impetuous and self-confident nature would never have dared to withstand the apparently irresistible power of Pope and Emperor. A man of soft nature would never have become a heretic and a rebel. We can pardon a great many errors in the man who had the courage publicly to burn the Pope's bull. And at no hour in Luther's life does he appear to better advantage, never did his courage rise higher, never did he more unmistakably stand forth as the hero of the German nation, than on the day when, by this significant symbol, single-handed, he defied the powers that were gathering to crush him.

It was a great day at Wittenberg—greater than the actors thought. If he had failed, what Luther did that day would have seemed ridiculous, the merest bravado. But he was not to fail. By a kind of intuition he even then understood his position better than the world has since understood it; he felt that there were two great parties in the world, the heads of those parties Leo X and Luther. It has been objected that he spoke of himself as "the holy one of the Lord," and his friends have answered that it was not himself but Christ to whom he referred. In

[1] On the burning of the bull, see LOL, 5: 251 *seq.* A German version is in Walch, 15: 1617. Compare Luther's letter to Staupitz, January 14, 1521, De Wette, 1: 541. The spot is now marked by a large oak tree, surrounded by an iron railing.

the one case malice failed to apprehend the whole truth, and in the other friendly partiality has been a bad interpreter.[1] We may believe that he did call himself "the holy one of the Lord"; and in his position there was no presumption nor arrogance in his so doing. Leo X was accepted as the successor of the apostles, the Vicar of Jesus Christ; why might not Luther, who supposed himself to be standing for the truth, speak of himself in a peculiar sense as a servant of the Lord? Believing that he was doing the Lord's work, he might have spoken thus with the profoundest humility.

He immediately[2] declared and justified what he had done. If anyone should ask why he did it, the answer was that it was his bounden duty, as a baptized Christian, as a sworn defender of the Holy Scripture, as a daily preacher, to root out all unchristian doctrines. But it is instructive to notice that in the very act of overturning one pretended infallible authority, Luther sets up another. He taught the students the next day that unless they contended against the Pope, they could not be saved; that whoever took delight in the worship of popery would be eternally lost.[3] So invincible is the tendency among religious controversialists to hold that every important truth (or even unimportant truth) is a matter of eternal life or death. How Luther himself, and Erasmus with him, had argued earnestly against the folly and injustice of looking upon every error as heresy!

After the coronation of Charles at Aachen, and especially after the burning of the Pope's bull, every step was toward Worms. The decision of the Roman Curia had not settled the case as to Luther; the bull was slow in getting itself executed; very many thought it were better not executed. Men's minds were not at rest—they wished for some other tribunal to which the case might be referred; in the absence of a General Council, the highest authority in the Church, they thought of the Emperor and the Diet, the highest authority in the State. But if Luther were to appear before the Diet, it was not at all clear what the Diet was to demand of him or to do with him. There was no need that judgment should be passed upon him; the Pope had already condemned him. It was not even necessary that the Diet should order his execu-

[1] Schaff, 6: 248: "The 'Holy One' refers to Christ, as in Mark 1: 24; Acts 2: 27; not to Luther, as ignorance and malignity have interpreted the word. Luther spoke in Latin: *Quia tu conturbasti Sanctum Domini, ideoque te conturbet ignis aeturnus.*" The reference is to Josh. 7: 25. According to Schaff Luther meant that the Bull had disturbed the Lord in disturbing Luther. This is indeed implied, but only as he who touches one of the Lord's saints touches Him. By what authority does Schaff write *Sanctum* instead of *sanctum?*

[2] And also later, and more formally, in the tract, "Why the Books of the Pope and his Disciples were burned by Dr. Martin Luther," in Latin and German. LOL, 5: 257 *seq.* LDS, 24: 151; Walch, 15: 1619 *seq.* The elector, in a letter to Charles V, called it a very imprudent act.

[3] LOL, 5: 253.

tion; the bull made it the duty of any prince to do that without any order. He might be required to retract his teachings, but that had already been done by the bull. If the Diet should undertake to hear his cause, that would be a virtual denial of the Pope's supremacy, and an acknowledgment of the justice of Luther's complaints that he had been condemned unheard. Both parties felt that for the Diet to do anything was a reflection on the Pope; and yet it was evidently necessary for the Diet to do something.

The Emperor, too, felt the difficulty. He was a politician from his youth, and his conduct toward the Pope, even from the first, was affected by political considerations; but apart from these things, there was sufficient reason for his hesitation and vacillation. He was influenced now by one party, now by the other; or, as is most likely, now by his own independent judgment, and now by what seemed to be required of him by his position as the civil head of the Church. On November 28th, he wrote to the Elector from Oppenheim, directing him to bring Luther to Worms "in order to give him there a full hearing before learned and competent persons," and promising that no harm should come to him; in the meantime, the Elector was to require Luther to write nothing against the Pope. The Emperor was acting on the suggestion of the Elector, but between the time of this suggestion and the time of the Elector's receiving the letter things had been changed: Luther's books had been burned—he had been treated as a condemned heretic. This offended the Elector, and he wrote the Emperor December 20th, declining to require Luther's presence at the Diet. The Emperor, too, had changed; he had begun to realize that Luther was under the papal ban, and that any place in which he might be was declared under interdict. Luther therefore could not be permitted to come to Worms. He might be brought to Frankfort-on-Main, or some other place, to await further orders; but not even this was to be allowed unless he retracted what he had said against the Papacy. If he would not retract, he was to stay at home until the Emperor should have opportunity to confer with the Elector personally. The Emperor's second letter was dated December 17th.[1]

The Diet met January 28, 1521. Not long afterwards (February 10th) there came a brief from Rome making final Luther's excommunication—the days of grace having passed—and urging his condemnation by the Diet and Emperor.[2] But there was evident reluctance to proceed against him; something might yet be accomplished by negotiations. Glapio, the Emperor's confessor, and much in his confidence, had

[1] Correspondence in Walch, 15: 1697 *seq.*

[2] The bull, however, is dated January 4, 1521. *Mag. Bull*, 1: 618 *seq.*; Walch, 15: 1704 *seq.*

several interviews with Brinck, the Elector's chancellor. Everything, the confessor thought, might be arranged. Some of Luther's books were excellent, and all of them might be tolerated except the book on the "Babylonian Captivity." He drew the line there; but if Luther would only deny that he had written that book—it really was not like him—everything else might be pardoned. Glapio had forgotten that the Pope had condemned all Luther's writings, and that the bull was issued before the "Babylonian Captivity" was published. He sought an interview with the Elector, which was declined; Brinck had no authority or will to act, and the conferences accomplished nothing. In the meantime, strong pressure was brought to bear upon the Emperor; daily conferences were held with him, at which the Elector's friends, and especially the Elector, were not present. He at last gave way and had an edict prepared against Luther. This, however, he would not consent to issue, without the advice and approval of the Diet. The whole case was referred to the assembled nobles; Luther's fate was in their hands; and the question was to be argued.

Aleander,[1] as he had all along been, was the representative of the papal cause. He had not long completed his fortieth year, and had been learned and distinguished from his youth. His acquaintance with Hebrew suggested the accusation that he was of Jewish extraction; he knew Greek from his childhood, and Latin he used with great readiness and force. He held many offices of trust. At this time he was librarian of the Vatican, but was released from the duties of this position that he might undertake his important mission to Germany. His selection for so delicate and difficult an office indicated the reputation in which he was held, and he so acquitted himself as to justify the selection. His address before the Diet was long, eloquent, impressive—somewhat weakened, however, by its bitterness and vehemence.[2] He spoke, he said, in defense of the papal throne, which was so dear to them all. He enumerated the heresies taught in Luther's works. We already know what they were. Luther was obstinate, disobedient to the Pope's summons, refused to be instructed; the Pope had condemned him, and it was the Emperor's duty to enforce the condemnation; the laity had nothing to do with such questions except to carry out the Pope's decrees; ruin would follow if Luther were not condemned; a decree from the Emperor would restore quiet, and preserve the Church and the Empire.

[1] Aleander 1480–1543. For sketch of his life and writings see Roscoe, "Leo X," 2: 284 *seq.*

[2] Erasmus and Aleander had been on good terms before the Diet at Worms. Erasmus bitterly condemned the bitterness of his speech against Luther. Roscoe, 2: 287.

Such were some of the considerations that the nuncio urged; he gave to the Pope the old traditional position of supremacy; Rome had already spoken, and only action was needed. He sat down amid murmurs of approbation, but he had made no new points, given no fresh reasons. He left the case exactly where he found it, and, as soon as men's minds had time to cool, the same old difficulties looked them in the face. A learned Italian had presented the cause of the Pope, hardly less against the Diet than against Luther. A few days afterwards a representative German, Duke George of Saxony, already Luther's enemy, presented the case of Germany against the Pope. There were many things of which he complained, exactions and usurpations, the growth and accumulation of years. What had been granted in particular emergencies for the benefit of all, the Popes had continued to collect for their own benefit; what the Germans had freely given was now exacted as a debt; and what the Popes had once given freely the Germans were now required to buy. The movement had been in one direction only, always in favor of the Papacy. The power of the Pope to benefit Germany had greatly diminished; the cost of supporting him had greatly increased. The less he was worth the more he cost —so Germany was beginning to feel. A committee of the Diet was appointed, and brought in a long list of grievances, a hundred and one in all.[1]

With so many grievances against the Pope already, the Diet would hardly be in a hurry to take the Pope's part against a popular German; the condemnation of Luther, and especially the manner of the condemnation, was itself another grievance. The law, or at least custom, required the execution of the bull, and was against granting to a condemned heretic a new hearing before a secular tribunal. It was one of those often occurring cases in which law demands one thing and expediency or justice another. In such cases men usually resort to compromise: as nearly as possible, they neither keep nor violate the law; and this the Diet did. After a long discussion it was decided that it was not expedient to enforce stringent measures against Luther before hearing him. He was to be summoned, but there was to be no discussion with him; he was simply to be asked "whether or not he intended to insist upon the writings that he had published against our holy Christian faith." If he retracted the objectionable writings, he might be further questioned and heard, and he would be fairly dealt with. If he did not retract, the Diet would pledge itself to maintain the faith handed down by the Fathers, and the imperial edict against Luther should be issued. It was

[1] Walch, 15: 1730 *seq.*; and cf. Gebhardt, *Die Gravamina der Deutschen Nation gegen den römischen Hof.* 2d ed. Breslau, 1895.

a virtual victory for the anti-papal party. Aleander had sought to prevent Luther's being heard and had failed.[1]

In the interval between October 6, 1520, and the following March 6th, when he was summoned to Worms, Luther had an interesting experience. His excommunication put him in a new position, and changed his attitude to everything about him. First of all, it released him from all those obligations that came upon him from his relation to the papal Church—it freed him from hampering vows. Not less important, it, incidentally freed him from certain traditional opinions that had held him, and still held him to some extent, in bondage. In the beginning of his work he had taught that God, in forgiving sin, first subjected the penitent to the priest in all things. It was the priest who absolved, and the judgment and sentence of the priest carried with it the judgment and sentence of God. It was this belief that gave the priest his power over the consciences of men; and that power was used against Luther. It was an easy thing to ask anyone who came to confess if he had, or had read, or approved Luther's books. If he answered affirmatively, absolution was withheld. According to Luther's own teaching, the priest's absolution was very important; the withholding of it was a serious matter. Many might feel that they read Luther's books at the peril of their souls, and would give them up at the command of their priest. The situation was new and threatening; Luther must provide for it; he had been gradually coming into a position from which the way would seem clear. He had already taught that in the sacraments faith is the principal thing—the sacraments were indeed important, and not to be despised, but faith was the life of them. He had once held that while the priest's absolution and God's absolution are not of equal importance (one being real and essential, the other only formal), they were yet inseparably joined. As he had gone on, the inward and vital had grown and the outward and formal had dwindled, until it had become only a dim and wavering line. It only needed a little help from without to force him to see that the gracious promises of the Gospel are made to the sinner himself and for himself, and not to the priest for him. The new situation furnished that help,[2] and he now taught that Christ is for every believing soul a present and sufficient priest, and gives immediate and full absolution to those who make their confession to him. This is the peculiar Protestant doctrine, that Christ and not the Church, in himself and not by the Church, is the

[1] Walch, 15: 1729.

[2] Speaking of the effect of the Bull, and of papal opposition generally on Luther, Sarpi says: "Martin failed not to confirm his doctrines by divers writings, and accordingly as he studied he discovered more light, even passing some step further forward, and finding articles of which in the beginning he had not thought."—"Hist. of Council of Trent," year 1520.

dispenser of salvation to men. To those who hold this doctrine, the frowning and threatening, or the weeping and pitying, priest is but a shadow; his lips move, but there is no voice. In other words, the priest is no priest at all, or a priest only in the sense in which all Christians are priests. This is the doctrine that came fully to the excommunicated Luther, and with it he delivered himself and his friends from the terror of the Papacy. Before this time, even with Luther, the faith that justified was faith in the promise of Christ made by the priest; after this time it was distinctly faith in Christ himself, as the loving, pitying, forgiving, redeeming Lord.

The development of Luther's doctrinal views brought him into closer contact with the unseen and spiritual; all intermediaries were thrust aside, and he stood face to face with God. His sense of immediate responsibility to and reliance on Christ as his Lord and helper, gave him courage and enthusiasm. It prepared him for the part that was before him. Accordingly, when the Emperor's November letter came, ordering him to Worms, and he was asked what he would do, he answered, "If I am summoned, so far as depends on me, I will come, even if I have to be carried sick; for if the Emperor calls me, no one can doubt that the Lord calls me."[1] He was disappointed when the Emperor withdrew his order. As the Diet did not have distinct notions of what he was to do at Worms, neither did he. There was one thing he would not do: he would not retract. He was willing to die, if necessary; he hoped that the way might be opened for him to make a useful impression. His thoughts were still of a discussion or examination, before learned, pious, impartial judges. "I am," he said, "ready to answer. . . for it is not from a presumptuous spirit, or with a view to personal advantage, that I have taught the doctrine with which I am reproached; it is in obedience to my conscience and to my oath as a doctor of the Holy Scripture; it is for the glory of God and the salvation of the Christian Church, the good of the German nation; and for the extirpation of so much superstition, abuse, evil scandal, tyranny, blasphemy, impiety."[2] In writing these things he expected them to be made known to the Diet.

The safe-conduct of the Emperor was sent by a special messenger, and with it similar safe-conducts from Duke George of Saxony, the Elector Frederick and Philip of Hesse, through whose territories Luther must pass. The messenger also brought with him a letter from the Emperor to Luther, "the honorable, the well beloved, the pious."[3] The Emperor said, "Our sincere desire is that thou shouldst prepare immediately for

[1] Letter to Spalatin, Dec. 21, 1520; De Wette, 1: 534.
[2] Letter to Elector Frederick, Jan. 25, 1521; De Wette, 1: 550.
[3] *Ehrsamer, lieber, andächtiger.* Walch, 15: 1787. The other safe-conducts, mentioned in the text, follow directly after this in Walch.

this journey, in order that, within the space of twenty-one days fixed by our safe-conduct, thou mayest without fail be present before us. Fear neither injury nor violence. We will firmly abide by our aforesaid safe-conduct, and expect that thou wilt comply with our summons." The Emperor also said that an inquiry was to be instituted touching Luther's doctrine and books; again, as in November, he entirely ignored the Pope's bull of excommunication. It was noticed and resented that he addressed a condemned heretic in terms of honor and affection.

The messenger reached Wittenberg March 24th. His arrival occasioned some anxiety; it brought near what had before been contemplated from a distance. Luther was now to face in a practical way the question of going to the Diet, and for him and his friends the crisis had come. They could not but recall the similar case of John Hus, who, trusting to the safe-conduct of Emperor Sigismund, went joyously to the Council of Constance, hoping to enlighten and convince his enemies. In spite of the safe-conduct he was betrayed, imprisoned and burned. It was a case that might well linger in the memories of men. An incident of the last day of Hus before the council was especially impressive: he was telling his judges that he was present of his own accord, that no power could have forced him to come, that he came freely, relying on the promised protection of the Emperor; as he said this, he looked at Sigismund—their eyes met, and the Emperor blushed. A hundred years afterwards, that blush was to influence the fate of a greater than Hus. It is said that Charles V was approached, reminded that there was no obligation to keep faith with heretics, and urged to give up Luther to the Pope; the young Emperor answered that he did not wish to blush as Sigismund did. Thus the fate of Hus rendered surer the safety of Luther; a true man, wronged, betrayed, unrighteously done to death, secured for others what he could not secure for himself—the protection of a sacred pledge. But who could tell beforehand that Charles was not to imitate the "false Sigismund"?

Many of Luther's associates in Wittenberg endeavored to dissuade him from obeying the Emperor's mandate. Well was it for his fame and work, well was it for his cause, that he refused to heed their advice. Like many another he had need to offer the prayer, "Lord, save me from my friends—I can defend myself against my enemies." These affectionate and well-intentioned, but faint-hearted, colleagues were advising him to take a fatal step, one that would have been more damaging to his work than all the machinations of his foes—that would, in fact, have been playing his enemies' game, and bringing the Reformation in Germany to a sudden close. Luther was right: the champion of a great cause is never undone, save by himself. A crisis had been reached in the

Reformation where a failure in moral courage in the leader would have ruined everything. If Luther lacked political training and skill in affairs to see this, he knew it intuitively. The hour had come for him to play the man, to dare the worst that could befall him, or to abandon his cause, and after all his bold words confess himself a coward and a weakling. He rose to the occasion; this proved that he had martyr-stuff within him; he showed that he was a great man, and not merely the speaker of great words. The moral stature of Luther was disclosed to all the world.

The journey of Luther to Worms was more like a royal progress than the going of a condemned heretic to his doom. At Leipzig the Cup of Honor was offered him, as to a distinguished and highly esteemed guest; at Naumberg he dined at the burgomaster's table, and a priest gave him a portrait of Savonarola, with an exhortation to stand fast in the truth; at Weimar he rested a day and preached, and Duke John sent him money for the further expenses of his journey; at Erfurt Crotus Rubianus—he of the *Epistolæ Virorum Obscurorum*—now rector of the university, met him at some distance from the city and escorted him with forty horsemen to his old home in the Augustinian monastery. Here he remained two days, preaching on Easter Sunday in the Augustinian church to a congregation that overflowed it. At Eisenach he had a violent attack of illness, but pressed on to Frankfurt, whence he wrote to Spalatin: "We are proceeding on, my dear friend, notwithstanding the physical sufferings with which Satan has afflicted me, in order to delay my progress; for you must know, all the way from Weimar to this place, I have undergone greater pain that I ever experienced before. But Christ lives, and I will go to Worms to brave the gates of hell and the powers of the air."[1] Thence he went to Oppenheim, the last stage of his journey before reaching his destination. It was here that some of his friends made a final attempt to dissuade him from risking himself in the midst of foes at Worms, but he stoutly replied, "I will go to Worms, though there were as many devils as ever there were tiles."[2]

The truth is, however, that he was in far less immediate danger than he and his friends supposed. Quite apart from the invincible determination of Charles to stand by his pledged word, it is doubtful if he had the

[1] De Wette, 1: 586.

[2] *Er mir Spalatino aus Oppenheym gin Wurmbs schriebe: Er wolte gin Wurmbs, wenn gleich so vil Teufel drynnen weren, als ummer Zeiegel da weren.* Spalatin, p. 38. This is without doubt the original form of the saying, though Luther himself repeated it afterwards with several verbal alterations. Myconius tells us that, when warned at Gotha that he would be burned as a heretic, Luther replied: "Though they should make a fire that would burn heaven high from Wittenberg to Worms, if it were necessary I would appear in the name of the Lord, and smite Behemoth in his mouth between his great teeth, and confess Christ and cause him to be chosen." *Hist. Ref.*, p. 39.

physical power to proceed against Luther, except by some secret treachery. Open arrest he would scarcely have dared. Worms was filled with armed retainers of princes who were at heart friends of Luther, and a disorderly rabble who made no secret of their intention to resort to violence if any harm came to their hero. Hutten, not far away, was making dire threats of the terrible things he would do. "Would to God I could be present at the Diet," said he (there is no apparent reason why he could not have been there); "I would make a stir! I would get up a tumult that should shake some of them!"[1] Such bluster is seldom dangerous. But though it was shrewdly suspected that Hutten's bark was worse than his bite, he appeared to have the full sympathy and countenance of Franz von Sickengen, and it was known that he could bite. An attempt to arrest Luther at Worms would certainly have provoked a bloody riot, possibly an open revolt against the youthful Emperor, who was already so beset with difficulties that it behooved him to add nothing more to them by precipitate and dishonorable conduct. In treating Luther as he did, Charles showed not only a praiseworthy sense of honor, but an admirable prudence. When Luther arrived in the city he could hardly make his way to his lodging, so great was the throng curious to see him.[2] His books had been publicly burned by order of the Emperor, but on the very next day booksellers had offered new copies, and peddlers had even appeared at the gate of the palace with Luther's books for sale. From this one circumstance we may infer the state of feeling in the town, and the Emperor's impotence had he been disposed to employ force.[3]

Of the Worms that Luther saw, but a single building remains to-day, the great Cathedral, whose lofty towers and twin domes are visible for many miles through the Rhine Valley. In the Thirty Years' War the town suffered greatly, and what remained of it was reduced to a heap of ashes in the wars of Louis XIV. It has been rebuilt, and to-day is a stirring, lively city, but it is another Worms than the Worms of Luther that the traveler sees now. In Luther's day there was a stately episcopal palace not far from the Cathedral, and in the great hall of this palace

[1] Walch, 15: 1845 *seq.* Hutten, *Op.* 4:292.

[2] See Veit Warbeck's account in a letter to Duke John of Saxony, Förstemann's *Neues Urkundenbuch*, p. 68.

[3] Impartial observers confirm the accounts of Luther's popularity at Worms. For example, the Venetian ambassador wrote to his government: "I cannot tell you how much favor he enjoys here, which is of such a nature that, on the Emperor's departure, I suspect that it will produce some bad effects, most especially against the prelates of Germany. In truth, had this man been prudent, had he restricted himself to his first propositions and not entangled himself in manifest errors about the faith, he would have been, I do not say favored, but adored by the whole of Germany."—"Calendar of State Papers," Venetian, 376. Cf. Aleander's Despatch of Feb. 8, in Brieger, *Aleander und Luther*, p. 48.

the meetings of the Diet were held.[1] As this was the first Diet of the new Emperor, much important business was to be transacted, and a large and brilliant gathering of electors, princes, nobles, knights, representatives of free cities, had come together from all Germany. It requires a little effort on our part to realize that this hearing of Luther, which is to us the chief significance of this Diet, was but an episode in its proceedings, albeit an episode of unusual interest.

This first Diet of the new reign, in fact, marks not only a religious but a constitutional crisis, in the Empire. In the person of Charles V the Emperor once more began to seem a great figure, but this was because of his immense hereditary possessions, greater than had ever before been united under a single European ruler since Charlemagne. From Spain he could draw soldiers whose numbers were limited only by his ability to pay them, and whose fighting qualities were unsurpassed in Europe; while from the rich Netherlands and from the mines of his colonies in the New World he could draw the money to equip them and keep them in the field. This was what made Charles a great prince; the Empire was his weakness, not his strength; it increased his obligations, not his resources.

At Worms, Charles represented the cause of national union, the constitutional monarchy; the princes stood for the existing oligarchy; each was contending for the mastery, or at least for a definite advantage. There was a great opportunity for a second Charles the Great to reconstitute the German Empire, and secure the unity in religion of the German people. Elector Frederick declined the task—he was right; he was not strong enough, but in a different sense from that which he meant. The young Charles proved not to be great—in this case the opportunity did not bring forth the man. But an obstacle even more insurmountable than lack of great abilities was in his way: his lack of understanding of the German people, and their failure to understand him. Germany had idealized Charles, and in a burst of national feeling had impelled the electors to choose a "German" ruler. They could not have acted in a more complete misunderstanding of the facts. Charles was German only in that his grandfather was a German, but the Habsburg blood flowed in his veins twice diluted, once with the French blood of his grandmother, Mary of Burgundy, and again with the Spanish blood of his mother, Joanna, daughter of Isabella of Castile. He used to describe himself as a Fleming, from the accident of his birth in Ghent, but the maternal strain was most prominent in his nature, and

[1] We know this positively from Spalatin, who was present with Elector Frederick. *Annales*, p. 39. For a description of Worms before the Thirty Years' War, see "Coryat's Crudities," Vol. II.

it was a Spanish prince who met the Diet at Worms, unable to speak or understand the language of his new subjects.

Though not a man of the first intellectual and moral power, Charles did not fail chiefly by reason of this defect. He was the greatest man of his age—of the rulers of Europe, that is to say. At the time of his election little was known of his personality, but he was esteemed by most of those who then met him as a cipher or a simpleton. Leo X called him *ce bon enfant l'empereur*, with scorn and contempt. Aleander, who had seen much of him at close range, was of a different opinion. This scholar and man of the world, a shrewd judge of men, decided at his first interview with Charles that here was a prince well endowed with prudence far beyond his years—one who had much more at the back of his head than he carried on his face. He never had occasion to change his opinion.[1]

Before the question of Luther came before the Diet, weeks had been spent in wrangling about the constitutional question, and it was still dragging along when he reached Worms. The princes proposed a permanent imperial Council (*Reichsregiment*), which should exercise the chief functions of rule, whether the Emperor were present or absent, and should therefore decide all imperial questions, domestic as well as foreign. The Emperor should not even be represented in this Council, save as his hereditary domains should elect members; but the Estates of the empire, and even the towns, should elect representatives. Under such a constitution the imperial power would have been absolutely extinguished, and Germany would have become a federated oligarchy. Charles, on his part, proposed that there should be a representative Council, indeed, but that it should sit only during his absence from Germany, and then under a regent appointed by himself. Of twenty members he should have power to appoint six, and while the members representing the Estates should be changed quarterly his nominees should be permanent. Direction of foreign affairs was to be reserved to the Emperor himself, and his assent should be required for all domestic measures of importance. This would have made the imperial power a reality, such as no Emperor of recent times certainly had possessed.

As usual, a compromise was the result of these conflicting claims. The Emperor was permitted to nominate the president of the Council and four members out of twenty-two. The Council should sit only in the Emperor's absence, but on his return should be an advisory body until a Diet was convoked. The power to transact ordinary business was conceded to the Diet in the Emperor's absence, but the decision of im-

[1] Kidd, p. 81. As throwing light on the character of Charles, it may be mentioned that his favorite motto, though he used others, was *plus oultre*.

portant matters was reserved to him; while as to foreign policy a check was placed on the imperial authority by the promise of Charles to form no alliances affecting the Empire without its consent. On the whole, Charles was considerably the gainer by these prolonged debates. Much was done to strengthen the imperial Council, which during the subsequent years of the Reformation had so prominent a part in affairs. An attempt was made also to strengthen the imperial finance, for just at this juncture the imperial treasury was at a very low ebb, and the other resources of Charles were not immediately available in proportion to his wants. It has been well for us to pause for the consideration of these matters; for they not only are indispensable for an understanding of subsequent events, but have an important bearing on the matter in hand—they help to explain the comparative mildness with which Luther was treated. A strong party in the Diet, possibly a majority, were sufficiently in his favor to make it inexpedient for the Emperor to do anything to antagonize them, while his personal affairs and his dynastic position were so delicately poised.

It was about noon of April 16th that Luther entered the city,[1] and the hour was fixed for his hearing the following day, at 4 P.M. On account of the crowds, he was conducted to the palace by devious back ways, and introduced into the presence of the Emperor and the Estates. No more imposing or magnificent scene could then have been found in the world than that Diet. On a throne raised upon a dais sat the Emperor, serenely beautiful in his youth, of whose political deftness and strength of will his placid face gave little token, as he listened with unmoved features to the proceedings—the most powerful monarch at that moment in the world, in spite of some immediate and temporary embarrassments, and invested as Emperor with a sanctity that no other earthly ruler could claim. At his side stood his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, who was to play an important part in the coming struggle for reform and liberty in Germany. On either side were grouped the electoral princes. First in dignity, in the absence of the King of Bohemia, was the Archbishop of Mainz, whose acquaintance we have already made, the primate of Germany, clad in his gorgeous robes, arch-chancellor of the Empire throughout Germany. As it was in his diocese that the Diet was held, it was his recognized privilege to stand on the Emperor's right, while

[1] "Two thousand people accompanied him to his lodgings in the house of the Knights of St. John. In front rode the Imperial herald, then Luther with his three friends [Amsdorf, Petzensteiner, a brother Augustinian, and Swaven, a representative of the Wittenberg students]; then on horseback, Drs. Jerome Schurf and Justus Jonas, and an escort from Erfurt; and, in the rear, his Saxon friends." Jacobs, "Luther," p. 186. All borne out by the contemporary records. Schurf was professor of jurisprudence at Wittenberg, and a trusted adviser of the Elector and Luther.

the first place on the left was taken by the Archbishop of Cologne, arch-chancellor of the Empire for Italy. Next to the Archbishop of Mainz came the arch-steward of the Empire, Count John, of the Palatine, who bore into the Diet the imperial orb. First of the secular electors, next to the Archbishop of Cologne, was Elector Frederick, grand marshal, who bore the imperial sword before the Emperor. Him we already know very well. The other electors were the Archbishop of Trier, a just but timid man, a warm friend of Elector Frederick, who was distrusted for his moderate opinions by the nuncio, Aleander; and Margrave Joachim, of Brandenburg, yet faithful to the Church, but later to join the Lutheran movement. There were four other Margraves present, and twenty-seven Dukes, easily chief among whom stood Duke George of Saxony, staunch old German, and staunch old Catholic too. Two Landgraves are mentioned, the one of note being Philip of Hesse, afterwards surnamed the Magnanimous, then but a youth of seventeen, later the first prince to introduce the Reformation into his domains. Among these secular princes were grouped a goodly array of prelates, in full canonicals—the Archbishops of Bremen, Salzburg and Panorm, the latter a Cardinal; the bishop of Wallas, also a Cardinal, and eleven other bishops and four abbots. In all there were two hundred and six persons in attendance at this Diet. And this does not include a brilliant galaxy of ambassadors and honored visitors representing the principal rulers of Europe, conspicuous among them the Archbishop of Toledo, and most important of all, the two papal legates, Aleander and Caraccioli.

Into this presence was led a single, black-robed monk, whose "cares and studies had made him so thin," as a friend writes of him, "that one may count all the bones of his body." Remember that this man had never seen a court before this day, that he was a peasant by birth and breeding, and separated by that fact from his judges by a gulf whose breadth and depth we can but faintly realize. In his very blood was a hereditary reverence for rank and authority, and the effect of such an assemblage upon him was certain to be tremendous and awe-inspiring. It would flutter the pulses of any one of us, it nearly paralyzed Luther! It was one thing to write bold words, from the quiet and security of his cell at Wittenberg—to lecture and denounce princes and prelates on paper; it was quite another thing to stand in the presence of these formidable persons, look them bravely in the face and speak the same bold words. Would Luther do it? Could Luther do it?

At first it seemed that he could not. The marshal commanded him not to speak unless he was spoken to, and to answer promptly and truly the questions put to him. Aleander had arranged the procedure. The

jurist Eck,[1] official of the Archbishop of Trier, then put to him, first in Latin afterwards in German, two questions: "Do you acknowledge yourself the author of the writings published in your name, which are here before me? Will you consent to retract certain of the doctrines that are contained therein?" At Schurf's suggestion the titles of the books were read, and Luther acknowledged them to be his. He was again asked, "Will you retract the doctrines therein?" The crucial moment of Luther's life had come, and he did not seem to be ready with an answer. He was plainly disconcerted by the proceedings: this was not the expected examination before impartial judges, with an opportunity to defend his views from Scripture, and a retraction to be made after he had been proved wrong by the Scriptures and by sound arguments. This was but a repetition of what he had been hearing from the beginning, of what Cajetan had said to him at Augsburg—Rome's one word all along had been "retract." There had been no serious attempt to refute him, there had been no idea whatever of hearing him.

In a low voice that could hardly be heard even by those near him he began his answer, but as he proceeded seemed to gain courage. The question, he said, was so serious, concerning as it did eternal salvation and the free proclamation of the divine word, that it would be rash and dangerous for him to reply until he had meditated on it in silence and retreat. Wherefore he besought his sacred Majesty to grant him time to reply with full knowledge of the point at issue.

At this answer, there was no little surprise in the Diet, but after some deliberation it was announced that, though Luther well knew what he had been sent for, and had had ample time to prepare his reply, his Majesty of his grace would give him another twenty-four hours. The criticism was no doubt warranted, and many historians and biographers of Luther have unnecessarily puzzled themselves and their readers by concocting ingenious explanations of Luther's conduct on this occasion, as if the strange and disturbing circumstances in which he found himself were not a quite sufficient explanation. Perhaps he ought to have known what to expect, perhaps he ought to have been prepared; but the reality, when he came to face it, was so much more awful than anything he had expected, that for the time he lost that command of his faculties which he felt to be necessary to present his cause adequately. Anybody who has ever had an attack of what we call "stage fright" will know just how Luther felt, and why he decided that he must have a chance to recover his composure and mental poise before he attempted to speak the words on which so much depended.

[1] Hutten calls him *einen ganz ungelehrten Sophisten.* Letter to Pirkheimer, Walch, 15: 1938.

Luther's apparent failure to rise to the situation and do what his friends and admirers expected of him, not only surprised but dismayed them. It correspondingly encouraged Aleander and the papal party. The Emperor was not favorably impressed, and is reported to have said to his courtiers, "This man will never make a heretic of me." News of what had happened was speedily circulated through the city, and on his way to his lodgings many tried by friendly words and exhortations to renew Luther's courage, urging him to stand fast for the truth. The young Landgrave of Hesse, who had seen Luther that day for the first time, came to his lodging, and closed a conversation by saying, "Dear Doctor, if you are in the right, so may our Lord help you." On his way home, some say, but more probably the next day on his way to the palace, George von Frundsberg, a well-known mercenary captain of the time, clapped Luther on the shoulder with the encouraging words: "Little monk, little monk, now goest thou thy way to take a stand such as I, and many a commander, even in our sharpest battles, have never taken. If thou art of good intent and certain of thy affair, go in God's name and be comforted—God will not forsake thee." That there had been no wavering in Luther's intent, no question as to what his answer would be, nothing more than a temporary nervous weakness, is evident from a letter that he wrote that evening from his lodgings to a friend, "But I shall not withdraw a single jot, Christ being my helper."

On the 18th Luther appeared again before the Diet. Their political business had occupied the Estates, so that it was already growing dark when Luther was brought in. Again the question was put to him, but in somewhat different form from that of the previous day. "Do you wish to defend all the books that you have acknowledged as your own, or to retract any part of them?" He made his answer, first in German and then by request he repeated it in Latin.[1] He began by asking pardon if he should violate any etiquette, since he was nothing but a poor monk, unaccustomed to courts, who had never preached or written aught save for the glory of God and the honor of the Gospel. Among the books that he avowed were three classes, he went on to say. The first were written for the edification of believers, and his adversaries admitted them to be harmless, and even useful. He could not retract these. In another class of books he had attacked the Papacy and the doctrine of papists. None could deny that the papal laws had devoured as a prey this noble Germany If he should retract these books, he would

[1] Many authorities say just the reverse, that he spoke first in Latin, then in German; but the text follows Luther, who could hardly be wrong on such a point, while others might easily confuse the order in their later recollections.

but be adding to the force of the Roman tyranny, and opening, not merely the windows, but the doors, to great impiety. How could he thus strengthen the reign of iniquity? In this Luther struck skillfully and strongly the chords of German nationalism, and many hearts in that assemblage must have responded to what he said.

Finally, said he, there was another class of books, polemic, written against his adversaries who had advocated the Roman tyranny. These, he confessed, had been at times too violent, and he did not maintain that his conduct had been faultless. But the question, he said, is not concerning my conduct, but concerning the doctrine of Christ; and therefore he could not disown even these writings, for Rome would make use of such disavowal to extend her oppression. He then demanded evidence against himself and a fair trial. "I stand here," he declared, "ready, if anyone can prove me to have written falsely, to retract my errors, and to throw my books into the fire with my own hands." He had weighed well the strife that his doctrine would bring into the world, but our Lord had said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." "Beware," said he, "lest if you condemn the divine word, that word send forth upon you a deluge of ills." He cited the case of Pharaoh, and the ruin he brought upon his country by seeking to reign through what he thought to be wisdom, and added, "I seek not to offer advice to your high and mighty understandings, but I owed this testimony of a loving heart to my native Germany."

It was a brave speech, a strong speech, delivered with self-possession and in a clear voice that could be heard by the whole assembly—a striking contrast in every way to his manner of the previous day. It was no doubt a surprise and a disappointment to the papal party, but to lovers of the Gospel truth and lovers of their country as inspiriting as the blast of a trumpet. Hardly had his words ceased when Eck rose and angrily exclaimed that Luther had not answered the question, that this was not an occasion for general discussion, but to ascertain from Luther whether he would retract his errors, which were the errors of Hus and other heretics, and had been condemned by the Council of Constance and at other times by the Church. What was wanted was a straightforward answer, *non cornute*, Would Luther retract or not?

Luther replied with some heat: "Since your imperial Majesty and highnesses demand a simple answer, I will give you one without horns or teeth: Unless I am convinced of error by the testimony of Scripture or plain reason (for I put no faith in Popes or councils alone, which have erred and contradicted each other often) I am overcome by the Scriptures[1]

[1] To understand fully what Luther meant by appealing to the Scriptures one must read his later writings. For some illustrations, see Alzog's "Church History," 3: 38, 39, esp. note on 39.

that I have cited and my conscience is bound the word of God. I cannot and will not retract anything, for it is neither safe nor right to act against one's conscience. Such is my profession of faith, and expect no other from me." Having given this answer in both languages, he added "God help me, Amen."[1]

Still Eck was dissatisfied, and a sharp altercation followed between him and Luther, Eck saying that Luther could not prove that councils had erred, and Luther affirming that he both could and would prove it at any time that might be assigned him. The hour being late, the Emperor cut this short and dismissed the assembly. Luther returned to his lodgings full of joy. An eye-witness says that as he reached his temporary house, he threw up his hands with a joyful gesture, crying, "I am through, I am through." Well might he rejoice. A peasant's son had stood before Cæsar, an obscure German professor had lifted his voice against the theologians of the world, a poor monk had withstood the sentence of the supreme Pontiff of Christendom, and made good every bold word that he had written. In the presence of the most powerful of Church and State in Europe he had maintained the supremacy of the Scriptures as the rule of a Christian man's life, and the inviolable rights of the individual conscience against the tyranny of Popes and councils. Much depended on the speaking of those words. Luther at Worms represented the cause of Christian liberty, the progress of Christian civilization, and his recantation and submission would have been an incalculable disaster to the world.[2] Never again was he to be so heroic a figure, never so truly powerful, because never again would his voice be so truly the voice of the German people. The cumulative grievances of Germany against Rome, no less than Germany's demand for relief from spiritual despotism, found in him their mouthpiece.

In the evening he held a sort of reception. A large number of the greatest nobles and prelates at the Diet came to see him and congratulate him on his bold defense. He had touched the heart of Germany by his

[1] I have followed in this account of the Worms hearing, Luther's own account, LOL, 6: 5 *seq.*; LDS, 64:374 *seq.*; Walch, 15:1917 *seq.* Cf. his later account, a few days before his death, LDS, 64: 366 *seq.* This is, however, confirmed at every important point, and sometimes as to the very words, by a despatch of Aleander's, dated Worms, April 19. "And as Martin went out from the Imperial hall," says Aleander, "he raised his hand on high after the manner of the German soldiers, when they exult over a good blow in a tournament." Brieger, *Aleander und Luther*, p. 153. Cochlæus gives a briefer account of the proceedings, but virtually confirms Luther's. He says Luther closed with the words, *Gott helfe mir, Amen. Commentaria*, p. 34. Spalatin gives the final words as, *So helf mir Gott, denn keyn Widerspruch kann ich nicht thun.* Luther, however, gives the words that have become traditional: *Hie stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders, Gott helfe mir, Amen.* All these words were probably spoken by Luther during the hearing, but not all in a single sentence, as here combined. See Schaff, 6: 309 for a full critical discussion of this question; also Köstlin, 1: 419.

[2] At the inn, *Mir Spalatino sagt: Wenn er tausend Kopf hett, so Wolter sie ihm ehr alle lassen abhauen, denn ein Widerspruch thun.*

speech, and many who now saw and heard him for the first time were, like Landgrave Philip, permanently won to the cause of religious reform. "The doctor's little room," writes Spalatin, "could not contain all the visitors who presented themselves. I saw among them Duke Wilhelm of Brunswick, Landgrave Philip of Hesse, Count Wilhelm of Henneberg, the Elector Frederick and many others." Curiously enough, considering the intimate relations that had been established between them for a long time, this was the first meeting face to face of the Elector and Luther.[1]

When the Diet met again the following morning, Charles read to them a very important document, written and signed by his own hand. There is no reason to doubt that it was his unassisted composition; at any rate, it represented his inmost sentiments and clearly stated what were to be the guiding principles of his reign. He said:

> My predecessors, the most Christian emperors of the German race, the Austrian Archdukes and Dukes of Burgundy, were until death the truest sons of the Catholic Church, defending and extending their belief to the glory of God, the propagation of the faith, the salvation of their souls. They have left behind them the holy Catholic rites, that I should live and die therein, and so until now with God's help I have lived, as becomes a Christian Emperor. What my forefathers established at Constance and other councils, it is my privilege to uphold. A single monk, led astray by private judgment, has set himself against the faith held by all Christians for a thousand years and more, and impudently concludes that all Christians up to now have erred. I have therefore resolved to stake upon this cause all my dominions, my friends, my body and my blood, my life and soul. For myself and you, sprung from the holy German nation, appointed by peculiar privilege defenders of the faith, it would be a grievous disgrace, an eternal stain upon ourselves and our posterity, if in this our day, not only heresy, but its very suspicion, were due to our defect. After Luther's stiff-necked reply, I now repent that I have so long delayed proceedings against him and his false doctrines. I have now resolved never again, under any circumstances, to hear him. Under protection of his safe-conduct he shall be escorted home, but forbidden to preach and to seduce men with his evil doctrines and incite them to rebellion. I warn you to give witness to your opinion as good Christians and in accordance with your vows.[2]

The reading of this document produced a great sensation; it is said that many of the princes turned as pale as death. They felt themselves to be in as great peril as Luther himself. And now the Diet had still to answer the question, What shall be done with the condemned heretic? The man without office, wielding no earthly power, from his peculiar

[1] *Denn ich seine Stimm mein Lebenlang nie gehöret, noch sein Angesicht gesehen, ohne zu Wormes auf dem Reichstage. Wider Hans Wurst*, LDS, 26: 67.
[2] Kidd, p. 85. Armstrong, "The Emperor Charles V," 1: 70.

position was himself free, and the course of things was to be determined by his will. On the other hand, the Emperor, the master of the world, was the slave of circumstances. He did not wish to condemn Luther; he did not know how not to condemn him. If Luther should be condemned no one knew what would come of it. Many sympathized with him personally, and many more sympathized with his cause. If he should not be condemned, there was already revolution, the end of the papal power, and for this the world was not yet prepared. In their perplexity moderate men of both parties turned to the old plan of compromise—there must be more conferences with Luther.

The instigator of the plan of renewed negotiations was Albert, Archbishop of Mainz. He was a German; he saw the dangers threatening Germany, and was anxious to avoid them. Luther must be heard before some German of candor and ability, a man who would command the confidence of both parties. Such a man was the Archbishop of Trier, and he was chosen to conduct the proposed conference. It met April 24th, in the Archbishop's palace. There were present the Elector of Brandenburg, Duke George of Saxony "and some other great men." Wehe (Vehus), a lawyer of Baden, was the spokesman. He began by telling Luther that the princes had sent for him not to dispute (always the same old formula!) but to treat with him in a friendly manner, and to admonish him privately of those things that seemed chiefly to concern him. As to councils, Wehe admitted that they had sometimes decreed different, but never contradictory, things. But granting that they had erred, still they had not fallen so low that every private man might despise and trample on their authority. Luther's books, if care were not taken, would cause great trouble. Men would interpret them according to their inclinations and desires, and what he meant for freedom they would take for license. His teaching was especially dangerous in that age, which, said Wehe, was more corrupt than any former age had been. It was true that some of Luther's books were harmless, even useful—this was the case with his earlier books—but those he had recently written contained things inconsistent with religion and piety. These might well justify the condemnation of all that he had written; his work was to be judged by its latest development, just as a tree is judged, not by its blossoms, but by its fruit. This hurtful advance in his teachings ought to startle Luther himself. "You ought," he said, "to think of both your own salvation and of that of others; and consider if it be fitting that those whom Christ by his own death had rescued from everlasting death, should by your books be seduced from the Church, and so perish." He reminded Luther that even in civil affairs nothing was better than the observance of the laws, without which no State or

government could subsist; and if the decrees of the Fathers were to count for nothing, everything in the Church, where all things should be most settled, would be in confusion. "These noble and virtuous princes," he said, "out of the singular love and affection they bear to the public, and particularly also for your own welfare, have thought it fit to admonish you of these things; for, without doubt, if you obstinately persist in your opinions and yield nothing, the Emperor will banish you, and not suffer you to have any footing within the bounds of Germany. So it concerns yourself seriously to reflect on the situation."

The case as thus stated was well worthy of serious consideration. It could not be denied that Luther's teachings looked toward revolution, which could not be accomplished without great trouble, how great no one could foresee. A dismemberment of the Church, an unsettling of religious, social and political relations, was a part of what was threatened. Nothing but the most imperative necessity—the defense or the assertion of the highest and most vital human rights—could justify persistence in a course that seemed to lead to such a result. The destruction of property, the weakening of confidence, the breaking down of moral barriers and the loosing of the worst of human passions, are not things that sober men can look forward to without a sense of dismay. And these are the things that many, among them some of Luther's friends, saw before them as the consequences of the conflict that he was bringing on. Was what he was seeking worth what it was likely to cost? There are human rights that we might consider cheap if they cost no more than the wretchedness of two or three generations of men; but we ought to be well convinced of their supreme value before we deliberately consent to pay such a price for them.

After a great revolution we forget the cost of it. Before such a revolution, the thoughtless, the fanatical and those possessed of the lofty spirit of devotion, make no account of it. But in estimating the conduct of men and of parties we must not neglect to consider the price that is paid, as well as the good that is gained. We are too prone to feel that those who opposed any movement that has resulted in good were influenced by selfish motives or unwise considerations. This may often be true, but we should feel a stirring of kindness toward those men who, like the Archbishop of Trier, pleaded with Luther to moderate his claims and give peace to Church and Empire. And he felt kindly toward them. "Most noble princes," he replied, "I give you hearty thanks. For so illustrious persons to vouchsafe to take this pains and trouble for so mean a man as I, is an act of extraordinary condescension." These are not ironical words, but simply true; it was an act of extraordinary condescension. He went on and disclaimed the notion that he despised

all councils; he acknowledged that his teachings might lead astray and cause disturbances, but he did not shrink from such consequences. "I will suffer anything," he said, "yea, sooner lose my life, than forsake the clear rule of the word of God; for we must obey God rather than men. As to the scandal that is objected to me, I neither can nor ought to be accountable for it, for there is a great difference between the scandals of charity and those of faith: the first consisting in life and manners, which by all means are to be avoided; whilst the others, arising from the word of God, are not at all to be regarded; for truth and the will of our Heavenly Father ought not to be dissembled, though the whole world should be offended thereat." He was not a favorer of disorder. He taught that men must honor and obey the laws and the magistrates; he had always so taught, as could be seen from his writings. But as to ecclesiastical laws, the case was different: they came into conflict with the teachings of the word of God, and laid "the hard and intolerable yoke of human laws upon the minds and consciences of men." He knew that the Scriptures forbid our trusting our own judgment, and he would not be obstinate about anything, provided he might have leave to profess the doctrine of the Gospel.

He was exhorted to submit his books to the sentence of the Emperor and his princes. His answer was that he would not decline the judgment of the Emperor and the estates of the Empire, provided they took for their guide the word of God; but said he, "unless I am thereby convicted of error, I cannot change my opinion." He begged that the princes would intercede with the Emperor, that he might be suffered to live with a good conscience. If he could but obtain that, he would be ready to do anything. The Elector of Brandenburg said to him, "Is it your meaning, then, that you will not submit unless you be convinced by the Holy Scriptures?" Luther replied, "It is, sir—or else by most evident reasons." [1]

With this the conference ended. It had served to develop and emphasize Luther's position. He recognized the evils that might follow his teaching, but he could do only what he was doing. The question had narrowed itself down to this: whether men should submit to the judgment of Popes and councils as an infallible standard of truth, or to the word of God interpreted by every man for himself. Or, to state the case somewhat more explicitly, Luther's contention involved two things: first, that the word of God is the sole standard of Christian truth; and second,

[1] In the second trial, before those who were friendly to him, it was doubtless harder for Luther to keep faith than in the Diet, where the consequences of what he was doing were not brought so strongly home to him. But having a second time resisted all incitements to recant, he had done all there was for him to do at Worms, and there was no occasion for his staying longer.

that every age must be free to understand it for itself. Thus having begun with a question as to the value of papal indulgences, he had gone on; unimportant or nonessential things had been left behind; and at last he had reached the one fundamental thing that separated the two parties. It was a question of authority: on the one side Pope and council, on the other the word of God.

The Archbishop of Trier had treated Luther with great kindness. He was a Romanist, but he was also a man of learning and candor and experience, and friendly to Luther. He was reluctant to abandon all hope of bringing about a reconciliation; he wished Luther to agree to submit to a general council. Luther professed himself willing, provided the controversy should be managed according to the rule of Holy Scripture. Failing to drive him from this position, the Archbishop asked him how he thought the evils threatening could be avoided. He answered that it might be done by following the plan of Gamaliel, and leaving the whole matter to settle itself. This could not be, and further efforts were useless. Luther was weary and impatient of them. He said to the Archbishop: "Most gracious Lord, I cannot yield. It must happen to me as God wills. I beg your grace to obtain for me the gracious permission of his imperial Majesty that I may go home again, for I have now been here ten days, and nothing has been accomplished." This was said the 25th of April. But Luther was wrong: a great deal had been accomplished, the results of which were to appear in later years.

There was a way to settle the whole matter; or, at least, some thought there was a way, which was not tried. Luther, one obstinate, condemned heretic, was involving the whole Empire in controversy, trouble and danger; why not put him out of the way? If the Emperor would only break his plighted troth all would be well. It was one of those times in which Satan seems to have the right and the power to bestow kingdoms. Before the Diet it was Luther who was on trial, now it was the young Emperor. It is well for him and well for mankind that he did not fail. He decided that it was better to keep faith than to have peace.[1] Charles was young, and inexperienced in the art of ruling men, and he therefore naturally and wisely deferred much to the judgment of his counsellors at Worms. But in this matter he took counsel solely of his own conscience and sense of honor. His healthy young instinct was wiser than the subtle advice of Aleander.

[1] "Some of the assembly, approving what was done at Constance, said that faith ought not to be kept. But Lewis, count-elector Palatine, opposed himself, as unto a thing that would brand the German name with a mark of perpetual ignominy, expressing with disdain that it was intolerable that for the service of priests Germany should draw upon itself the infamy of not keeping the public faith." Sarpi, bk. i, p. 13.

There was no reason why Luther should continue longer at Worms. The Emperor gave him a safe-conduct, allowing him twenty-one days in which to reach home, and dismissed him. He was not to teach, either by word or writing, on the way. It was April 26th when he passed out of the gate and onward. As he had refused to retract or to submit himself unconditionally to the judgment of any tribunal, the Emperor must issue a decree against him. This was done on the 26th of May, just one month after Luther's departure.[1]

Luther, the Pope, the Emperor and the Diet had now all done their part. The imperial ban had been pronounced. But who was to execute it, or was it to be executed at all? The question as to Luther had first been referred to a papal legate, then to the Pope, then to the Emperor, then to the Diet at Worms. The effect of the imperial edict was to refer it to the German people. Luther's private cause had become national, European.

The first act of the Lutheran tragedy was ended.

[1] Despatch of Aleander of that date, Brieger, p. 224. For the full text of the Worms decree, see Appendix IV.

PART II

FROM THE EDICT OF WORMS TO THE PROTEST AT SPEYER 1521–1529

CHAPTER I

THE NEW LUTHER

BEFORE Luther left Worms, the Elector Frederick had caused it to be intimated to him that means would be devised of giving him further protection,[1] but beyond that he seems to have been unapprised. The fewer to whom the secret was confided, the better it would obviously be for all concerned, and Luther was not a silent or discreet man, as the Elector well knew. Frederick, whom Aleander in his correspondence calls "the fox of Germany," was what the Scotch term a "canny" man. He could not openly defy the imperial edict by continuing his former protection of Luther, yet he was more than ever determined that the Wittenberg doctor, who had greatly pleased him by his conduct at Worms, should not suffer harm. He contrived a plan as simple as it was effective: Luther should disappear for a time; his whereabouts should not be known even to his most intimate friends; he should even be supposed to be dead; and after a while the storm might blow over.

On leaving Worms, Luther took the way to Eisenach, and after going some distance he dismissed the imperial herald. At several places he preached, which can hardly be called an honorable observance on his part of the terms of his safe-conduct, though his excuse was that he had never been party to an agreement that the word of God should be bound. Still, he had accepted, and had been glad to accept, from the Emperor a safe-conduct, the terms of which were that he should not teach by word or pen on his way home, and he kept his part of the contract less faithfully than Charles had kept his. Moving along leisurely, attended now by only two friends, toward nightfall of the 4th of May, as he was in a lonely part of the wood near Altenstein, a band of armed horsemen suddenly appeared and surrounded the carriage. Even his friends were deceived, and supposed themselves attacked by bandits; one of them fled for his life, the other, Amsdorf, went on to Wittenberg with the news that Luther was violently dragged away by these robbers and his fate

[1] Seckendorf, p. 159. This is amply confirmed by the letter that Luther wrote to Cranach from Frankfurt, April 28th: "I shall submit to being hidden away, and as yet do not know where. I would have preferred being put to death by the tyrants, especially by the furious Duke George, but was obliged to follow the advice of friends and wait my time." De Wette, 1: 588; Currie, 68. Cf. the letter to Melanchthon of May 12th, De Wette, 2: 1; Currie, 71.

was unknown.[1] As the days and weeks passed and nothing was heard of him, the people were filled with anxiety. Even his enemies rejoiced with trembling when they heard of this event, for things had come to such a pass that Luther dead might well be more troublesome to them than Luther living. "You have," says Alphonsus Valdesius, writing to Peter Martyr, "as some wish, the end; as I believe, not the end, but the beginning, of this tragedy. For I see that the minds of the Germans are much stirred up against the Roman See. Nor do I see that the imperial edict will have much weight with them, for after its publication Luther's books were everywhere sold—in villages and in open places—with impunity. Hence you may easily conjecture what will be done when the Emperor leaves Germany."[2] A little later, June 26th, Erasmus writes, "The Lutheran tragedy has been acted among us: would that it had never been brought on the stage."[3] Albert Dürer, Germany's greatest artist, then at Nürnberg, passionately bewailed in his journal the condition of the Church: "O God, is Luther dead? Who will hereafter deliver to us the Gospel so clearly? O God, how much would he have been able to write for us in ten or twenty years! O all ye pious Christian men, help me to bewail this man inspired by God."[4] His enemies began to be alarmed, and one of them wrote, "We can scarcely save our lives, unless we light a candle, and seek for him until we find him."

Luther has left no record of his sensations when the "bandits," with so well simulated violence, dragged him from his wagon, mounted him on a horse and spirited him away. If he for the moment supposed himself to be a real captive, he was soon undeceived. But eight miles distant was the castle of Wartburg, formerly a residence of the ducal family of Saxony and still one of their possessions. Thither Luther was taken in the darkness and silence of the night, and there he spent the next ten months in retirement and incognito. He doffed his monk's gown[5] and assumed the garb of a country gentleman; he let his beard grow; he was known as Junker George.

Luther could never be idle, and accordingly at the Wartburg he gave himself to the study of the Scriptures,[6] to numerous literary labors

[1] Spalatin tells the story of Luther's "capture" and taking to the Wartburg. *Annales*, 50, 51. Luther himself gives a briefer account, in his letter to Gerbel, November 1st, De Wette, 2: 89, Currie, 86.

[2] Gieseler, 4: 58. *Habes hujus tragoediae ut quidam volunt finem*, etc.

[3] *Lutheri Tragoedia peracta est apud nos*, etc. Erasmus, *Op.* III: 650.

[4] For this remarkable passage of Dürer's journal in full, see Moore's "Albert Dürer," in "The Library of Art," London, 1905, p. 157 *seq.*

[5] De Wette, 2: 7. On his return to Wittenberg he resumed his monk's garb and did not finally lay it aside until October 9, 1524. But at the Wartburg he assumed the character of Junker so completely that he even went hunting with the Duke's retainers at the castle. Letter to Spalatin, August 15th, De Wette, 2: 41, Currie, 82.

[6] To Spalatin: *Ego otiosus hic et crapulosus sedeo tota die: Biblem Graecam et Hebraeam lego.* De Wette, 2: 6.

and to meditation. He also carried on an active correspondence with his friends, who were promptly taken into his confidence, so far as to be informed of his safety, though the place of his residence was concealed from them. To Spalatin, who of course was in the secret, he writes from "Patmos," while to Melanchthon he dates his letters "from the region of the birds" and "from the wilderness." These letters inform us quite fully of his occupations. He wrote an exposition of the Psalms, working at this at intervals until November, when he sent an exposition of the thirty-seventh Psalm to the Wittenbergers, with a long letter.[1] During the same time he composed his treatise on monastic vows, which he sent to his father, with the letter already quoted, November 21st; and a tract of considerable length on the "Misuse of the Mass."[2] These labors were interrupted by periods of physical and spiritual depression. Luther had been accustomed to simple food and an active life; at the castle he changed to a sedentary life and richer food, with the very natural result of dyspepsia and gloom. He writes to Melanchthon: "It is now eight days that I neither write anything, nor pray, nor study, partly by reason of temptations of the flesh, partly because vexed by other cares."[3] Throughout life he was accustomed to refer whatever displeased or vexed him or seemed to hinder his work to the direct agency of the devil, in whom he believed with rather more energy than he believed in God. So now, instead of blaming his mode of life and changing it, he ascribes all his troubles to Satan. He even seems to have imagined that he had personal interviews with the devil, though the story of the inkstand and other similar tales are due to the vivid imaginings of his later admirers, rather than to anything that he has left on record.

But the chief labor of this residence at the Wartburg, and one of the things of prime importance in the history of the Reformation, was the beginning of his version of the Scriptures in German. So many reckless and unfounded assertions have been made about this, by both friends and foes, that it is important to ascertain the facts accurately. As we have already seen, Luther was fully occupied with other literary tasks from a few weeks after his arrival there until late in November. In a letter to his friend Lange, dated December 18th, he announces his intention to translate the New Testament into German, in terms necessitating the inference that the work had not yet been begun. On March 30, 1522, he writes Spalatin that he has translated the entire New Testament in his Patmos, and that he and Melanchthon are now revising

[1] De Wette, 2: 69.
[2] LOL, 6: 234 *seq.*; LDS, 28: 28 *seq.*; Walch, 19, 1068 *seq.*
[3] De Wette, 2: 22.

what he hopes will prove a worthy work.[1] This leaves little more than ten weeks for the completion of the work, for he brought a rough draft with him to Wittenberg for the criticism of Melanchthon. After receiving a hasty revision, this portion of the version was hurried through the press and published September 22, 1522. This would be a rapid piece of book-making, for both author and publisher, even in these days of advanced learning, plentiful apparatus of scholarship and unlimited mechanical facilities. Considering the conditions of Luther's day, the whole affair borders on the miraculous.

It would be difficult in any case to believe that a complete translation of the entire New Testament could have been made by a man of Luther's limited attainments in Greek, and with the imperfect apparatus that he possessed, in the short space of ten weeks. And, as we shall see, another task occupied a part of his attention and time during these very weeks. Any minister to-day, who has had the Greek course of a college and seminary, is a far better scholar than Luther. Let such a man, if he thinks Luther's achievement possible, attempt the accurate translation of a single chapter of the New Testament—such a translation as he would be willing to print under his own name—and multiply the time consumed by the two hundred and sixty chapters. He will speedily be convinced that the feat attributed to Luther is an impossible one. What then? Is the whole story false? That, too, is impossible—the main facts are too well attested. The solution of an apparently insoluble contradiction is a very simple one: Luther did not make an independent translation; he never claimed that he did; none of his contemporaries made the claim for him. It is only later admirers who have made this statement to enhance his glory, just as they have unduly exaggerated the paucity of the Scriptures and the popular ignorance of them before Luther's day, for the same purpose. We now know that both these assertions are untrue to historic fact, and have misled many unwary persons into inferences far indeed from the truth. The two assertions are so intimately connected, that in showing either to be unfounded the other is also and necessarily controverted.

Authorities differ concerning the number of editions of the Bible in German before Luther's version appeared, but none enumerate fewer than fourteen in High German and three in Low German. Those in High German, which are all that we need consider here, are apparently reprints of a single MS. version, of which two copies are still preserved, one in

[1] De Wette, 2: 115, 123, 176. In his letter to Spalatin he asks his friend, as one who at court sees such things, for the German names of the precious stones, and their colors, as given in Rev. 21. In a letter of May 19th he acknowledges receipt of the information, and sends Spalatin a proof of the first "signature" of the forthcoming New Testament.

a monastery at Tepl, Bohemia, the other in the library of the university at Freiburg in the Breisgau. The former, known as the Codex Teplensis, has recently been printed and is accessible to all scholars. As this MS. contains seven articles of faith that are evidently Waldensian, many have been led to attribute to this version a Waldensian origin. Others have pointed out that no more is proved by the MS. than a Waldensian ownership of it at some time, and have asserted a Catholic origin for the version. We need not enter into this controversy, which concerns a question of technical scholarship rather than the historic effect of the version; for, whatever theory of its origin may prevail, the fact of its frequent reprinting and wide circulation cannot be in any wise affected.

This version was certainly in the possession of Luther, and was as certainly used by him in the preparation of his version. This fact, once entirely unsuspected, and then hotly denied, has been proved to a demonstration by the "deadly parallel." It appears from a verse-by-verse comparison that this old German Bible was in fact so industriously used by Luther, that the only accurate description of Luther's version is to call it a careful revision of the older text. Just as the English Bible is the result of successive revisions, from the days of Wiclif to our own, so that our text has a demonstrable historic continuity, so the German Bible is the product of revision. This is not to detract in the least from the glory of Luther or to diminish the value of his version—it is merely to define with accuracy what he accomplished, and to distinguish his real achievement from the semi-legendary tales of Lutheran literature.[1]

For the doing of this work, Luther had marked qualifications and advantages. In the first place, he had a better text than had been available to former translators. The old German Bible had been translated from the Vulgate, and had followed it slavishly; Luther proposed to use the original Greek and Hebrew Scriptures as the basis of his work. For the New Testament he had the second Basel edition (1519) of Erasmus, in which many of the misprints of the first edition had been corrected. He did not fail to consult the Vulgate, and sometimes followed that version, which in some passages was made from an older text than that of Erasmus. He had, in addition to a better text, a complete knowledge of his mother tongue and a facility in its use that no man of his generation could match. Among the many dialectical forms of German in his day, there was no recognized standard; there was, in fact, no German language. He chose as the foundation of his work the Saxon dialect, as the familiar speech of his childhood and the language of the Elector's

[1] Krafft, *Die deutsche Bibel vor Luther*, Bonn, 1883. Cf. Haupt, *Die deutsche Bibelübersetzung der mitelalterichen Waldenser*, Würzberg, 1885. Specimens of the two versions are given by Schaff, 6: 351 *seq.* See also Keller, *Die Waldenser und die deutschen Bibelübersetzungen*, Leipzig, 1886.

court; this he enriched with the best words of other dialects, until he had a vocabulary that for fulness and flexibility left little to be desired. He had probably never seen or even heard of Dante's *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, but he unconsciously pursued the method there recommended, and practiced by the poet in the writing of the "Divine Comedy." The effect was similar in both cases: the resulting work was authoritative in fixing the literary standard of the language in which it was written. Luther's version became a German classic—it became *the* German classic—and was accepted as the type of literary German for subsequent generations. Not that the German language became stereotyped and incapable of progress, but the reading of this book by the whole nation had a formative and permanent influence on the language that no other book has ever approached. Such is the verdict of German scholars of the highest rank as authorities in literature and philology. Competent German critics declare that Luther's Bible exhibits the whole wealth, force and beauty of the German language, and it is still deservedly reckoned as the first classic of German literature. It is at once faithful to the original,[1] yet so free and idiomatic as to be virtually an original work.

But beyond this literary gift, Luther had another qualification in which he was unsurpassed—no man of his age had penetrated more deeply into the real spirit of the Bible. A good translation requires not only a scholar and a master of words, but as he himself said, a "truly devout, faithful, diligent, Christian, learned, experienced and practiced heart." It is only to one who approaches the Scriptures with such a heart that they yield their inmost meaning; and no man who has not the aid of the indwelling Spirit of God can make an adequate version of the Scriptures, however great his acquirements as a scholar. With all his faults and imperfections, and they were many and serious, Luther had "the vision and the faculty divine" beyond most men of his time.

He had no false pride, moreover, about himself and willingly recognized the superiority of certain of his friends in some things. He always bowed to the greater learning of Melanchthon, and gladly submitted his MS. to Philip's critical revision, before sending it to the printer. He consulted other friends and received help from them; Sturtz, at Erfurt, gave him information about the Scripture coins and measures and their German equivalents; while Spalatin, from the jewels in the Elector's treasury, was able to furnish a correct list of names for the precious stones of the New Jerusalem.

[1] While this is true in the main, occasional characteristic exceptions are to be noted. Luther's methods of handling Scripture are illustrated by his insistence upon inserting *allein* in Rom. 3: 28, in spite of its absence from the original, and against the earnest remonstrances of Melanchthon.

It was, however, when he began work on the Old Testament that he found outside help of the greatest value, in fact, quite indispensable. Luther knew rather less of Hebrew than of Greek, and soon found himself quite out of his depth in Job and the prophets. He organized a Bible Club (*Collegium Biblicum*) of which Bugenhagen, Cruciger and Justin Jonas were the principal members, after himself and Melanchthon. They met once a week and together compared and revised their text. Sometimes they progressed at the rate of barely a line of text to a session, so exhaustively they did their work. Luther reserved to himself the final revision, in order to make sure that the version should be in one style of idiomatic German throughout, or, as he said, that he might "make the prophets speak German" (*reden Deutsch*). He took endless pains to make his Bible "understanded of the people," by using the words that they used in the home, the shops, on the street. As an example of the pains he took, it is recorded that while translating the book of Leviticus he went to the butchers' shops and got the names used by the trade for every part of the carcass of a sheep, in order that all the terminology of the Jewish sacrifices might be accurately and intelligibly rendered.

We are anticipating the course of events, but it will be well to record just here the remaining facts about this version. The Old Testament version was completed and the entire Bible was published in 1534, and five other editions were prepared under Luther's supervision before his death. The last of these, appearing in 1545, is regarded as the final text. In consequence of the numerous unauthorized reprints, many errors crept into the text, and in process of time some intentional changes were made, so that a critical recension finally became necessary. This was accomplished about 1700 by the Canstein Bible Institute, and that edition became the *textus receptus* of the German Bible, until its recent revision by a committee of distinguished German scholars. This revision is now published at the Francke Orphanage, Halle, and is rapidly superseding the original Luther Bible; but the German Bible will always remain, as to its substance, Luther's.

Concerning the circulation of this version, definite facts are hard to obtain, because no statistics were kept or gathered. The number of reprints was almost innumerable, and none but the printers knew the number of volumes sold. The authorized printer at Wittenberg sold in forty years (1534–1574) a hundred thousand copies. After the utmost allowance is made for the circulation of the Bible in Germany before Luther, it is certain that he was the means of increasing its readers tenfold. The Bible was so cheapened and multiplied by his efforts that every German family might have a copy if it would. The Roman

Church was forced to emulate Luther, and versions made by its scholars were also issued, but they were not able to displace his work, which has survived with influence unimpaired to our day, while all its rivals went long since into complete oblivion. As to its effect on contemporaries, there can be no better evidence than the reluctant testimony of a Catholic opponent, Cochlæus: "Luther's New Testament was so much multiplied and spread by printers that even tailors and shoemakers, yea, even women and ignorant persons who had accepted this new Lutheran gospel and could read a little German, studied it with the greatest avidity, as the foundation of all truth. Some committed it to memory and carried it about in their bosom. In a few months, such people deemed themselves so learned that they were not ashamed to dispute about faith and the gospel, not only with Catholic laymen, but with priests and monks and doctors of divinity."[1] Luther had actually brought about that state of things in Germany which Tyndale vainly aspired to produce in England. "If God spares my life," said the English translator to an ignorant priest, "ere many years I will cause the boy who driveth the plow to know more of the Scriptures than you do."

After a while the whole Bible was as free and open to the humblest child as to the clergy. In the long cycle, circumstances opened it, as circumstances had closed it. So long as the Church worked among old populations, Greek and Latin, in the Roman Empire, there were many outside the clergy who could read, and Chrysostom and others did no idle thing when they urged the people to study the Scriptures for themselves. But when the new peoples came in, and churches were gathered among the barbarous tribes, among whom reading was an unknown art, the reading of the Bible was confined to the clergy alone. In time the feeling grew that what the clergy alone did, the clergy alone had a right to do. And so, the Bible, which had at first been closed to the people by circumstances came to be closed to them by law.[2] With the more general diffusion of light, and especially with the rise of the printing press, the conditions of popular learning came back again and brought again the Bible for the people. And Luther's teaching had prepared the people for the Bible. They had learned to look upon it as the one infallible authority in matters of religion—an authority that each one could

[1] *De Actis et Scriptis*, p. 55. Cochlæus complains of Luther's translation: *Contra ucterem et probatam Ecclesiae lectionem, multa immutauit, multa decerpsit, multa addidit, et in alium sensum detorsit: multas adjecit in marginibus passim glossas erroneas atque cauillosas, et in prefationibus nihil malignitis omisit, ut in partes suas traheret lectorem. ib.*, p. 54.

[2] For example, the synod of Toulouse, 1229, cap. xiv, decreed: *Prohibemus etiam, ne libros veteris testamenti aut novi, laici permittantur habere.* Mansi, 22: 196. Many similar rules were enacted by local synods, and, though no ecumenical council approved them, the practice of the Church generally was in accord with such canons.

consult for himself. In former times the question had been as to whether reason or faith should have precedence. In the new order there was room for both faith and reason; it was the office of faith humbly to accept the word of God, it was the office of reason to interpret that word. And this office of interpretation did not belong to the learned alone; the Scriptures address themselves to the common sense of men.

In the ensuing controversies, the Lutherans were far more ready in quoting the Scriptures than the Catholics, and so they generally seemed to the bystanders to have the better in the argument; their credit went up and that of the Catholics went down. Even the most learned Catholic theologians, because they did not know the Scriptures, seemed to the multitude to know nothing. In other respects their studies had not fitted them for the present emergency. They had neglected the languages and polite learning, and that at a time when learning was the rage. The Lutherans on the other hand, through the influence of Luther, Erasmus, Zwingli, Oekolampaduus, Melanchthon and others, had given full attention to such things. When the two parties came in conflict, the difference between them at once appeared. The Lutherans quoted Greek and Hebrew, to the confusion of their opponents and to the admiration of all who heard them. Their evident superiority in the use of the new and popular weapons made them bold and aggressive, using at times terms of contempt and making even learned men seem contemptible. In the enthusiasm of learning, and in the excitement of controversy, their powers were stimulated and their zeal quickened. The Catholics were everywhere on the defensive; they were without a leader, divided and hampered by the consciousness that in many things their party was in the wrong. The Lutherans had no misgivings; they were sure that they were in the right. They were kept together by their devotion to Luther and directed by his strong spirit. Him they regarded as the one true theologian; his adversaries they reviled as ignorant, enemies of the truth, and as hating him simply because he had cut off or diminished their stipends. In all this we have the explanation of the rapid spread of Luther's doctrines.

But while the printers were thus coining money from the sale of the German Bible, Luther himself never received one *Pfennig* of profit from it. He even declined a share of the profits when it was offered him, thus furnishing an unquestionable proof of his disinterestedness. It was a case where, like Paul at Corinth, he chose not to avail himself of an undoubted right, in order that all might see that he sought the good of his countrymen, not his own advancement, in making this version. Nothing that Luther ever did better became him than this action, or showed to better advantage the essential nobility of his nature. Surely,

if we find in him great faults, he had also great virtues, for which the world does well to hold him in high honor.

It should occasion no surprise that Luther and his colleagues devoted so much time and energy to this work of translating and circulating the Scriptures. In Luther's case, in particular, it was the natural result of his personal experience, and was also a logical necessity of his position. From the day on which he had discovered a copy of the Latin Bible in the library at Erfurt, the study of the Book of books had been his favorite occupation. He provoked the criticisms of some of his fellows in the monastery by this devotion to the Bible. When he began to teach at Wittenberg, as soon as possible he made the exposition of the Scriptures his special theme, delighting above all things in lecturing on the Psalms and the epistle to the Galatians. He loved to call himself a "Doctor of the Scriptures." In any case, therefore, the giving of the Bible in their native tongue to the German people would have been a most congenial work to him.

But as he went on, particularly after he became involved in the controversy regarding indulgences, the Scriptures continually assumed greater importance in his eyes. Experience led him, and his enemies drove him, step by step, until he had no recourse and no defense but the Scriptures; and at Leipzig, in debate with Eck, he definitely took his stand on the word of God as the final authority, superior to both Popes and councils. This position he had triumphantly maintained at Worms, and by so doing he had made the issue between the authority of Scripture and the authority of the Church a plain one, that the common people could perfectly understand. But if they could understand, they could not verify. Few of them had the Scriptures, and the version that some of them had was archaic and difficult to comprehend. The more Luther and his supporters appealed to Scripture, the more needful it became that the plain people should have the Bible in their hands, in a form that they could understand. The question of the success or failure of the Reformation had practically been referred by the Edict of Worms to the German people for decision. The placing of the German Bible in their hands at this psychological moment brought them to decide for the Reformation and not against it. Of all that Luther ever did, this was the most effective thing in making the Reformation immediately successful, and in insuring its permanence.

But while the leader was thus in seclusion at the Wartburg another work had been produced and published that was only less influential on the course of the Reformation than the writings of Luther himself. Melanchthon had been laboring on a brief, terse statement of the new evangelical doctrines. For this undertaking he was peculiarly adapted.

He had a more philosophical mind than Luther, who never became a theologian in any strict sense of that term, and always acknowledged his friend's superiority to himself as scholar and systematic thinker. If Luther could write with incomparable force in German, Melanchthon was unquestionably his master in latinity. The new work was sent in MS. to Luther at the Wartburg, and on being received back with well-deserved warmth of commendation, it was sent to press, and toward the close of 1521 appeared the *Loci Communes Rerum Theologicarum*. The little book grew out of Melanchthon's exegetical lectures during the year 1520 on the Epistle to the Romans. The notes on these lectures were taken down, gathered and published without his consent. What others had done in a fragmentary and unsatisfactory way made it necessary for him to do something better and more satisfactory. This is the origin of his famous *Loci Communes*, the first Lutheran theology. It was not a systematic treatise. He began by expressing a sort of contempt for the idle speculations of the scholastic theologians on the Trinity and the Incarnation. He would confine himself to practical matters: the knowledge of what the law requires of us; whence we can get the strength to keep the law; whence forgiveness of sin; how the soul may be strengthened against the devil, the flesh and the world; how the troubled conscience may be calmed. In a word, writing at a time of fierce controversy he did not undertake to discuss questions on which all parties were agreed, but to explain and enforce the peculiar phases of doctrine taught at the university of Wittenberg. There were two distinguishing things about his method: In the first place he discarded the multitudinous divisions of the schoolmen—his theology was not like the theology of Peter Lombard or Thomas Aquinas, or Duns Scotus, or any of the rest. In the second place he appealed to the Scriptures, literally and rationally interpreted, as his one sufficient authority. He rarely made quotations even from the older Fathers. It was the method of the new age, applied to religious discussions; and therefore the beginning of a new kind of theology. Melanchthon's book has been called an exposition of the theology of the University of Wittenberg. This is just what it was: the teaching of Luther, as Melanchthon understood it, explained in a calm, clear and forceful style, to which Luther was a stranger.

Melanchthon must be regarded as even more of a theological prodigy than Calvin, for the latter was within two or three months of his twenty-seventh birthday when his "Institutes" were published, while the former lacked about two months of completing his twenty-fourth year when the *Loci* appeared. As was the case with Calvin later, the young Wittenberg professor leaped into European fame by this one publication. Known before this to scholars, he now became known to everybody who read

the current literature of the age, for the book was not made for learned divines and great scholars alone, but for all intelligent and thoughtful people. The parallel with Calvin goes further: Melanchthon labored with loving care on his little treatise and published repeated editions of it through a long life, until he had greatly enlarged it, removed all its early crudities and made of it an almost perfect compendium of Lutheran doctrine. As such it was a theological text-book for many generations, taking the place in the Protestant Church that had so long been held by the "Sentences" of Peter Lombard in Catholic lecture-rooms.[1]

The *Loci* were translated into many languages and circulated throughout Europe, finding equal favor among learned and unlearned, but being especially effective in winning the adhesion of the scholarly class to the Reformation. To harmonize historic continuity with the purification of religion and national self-dependence was Luther's problem; to reconcile Protestantism and Humanism, evangelical religion and classical learning was the task of Melanchthon—in him the humanist was never lost in the theologian.

No man could reach the heart of the common people like Luther, but no man in Germany was listened to with so much respect by the learned as Melanchthon. Without him as a coadjutor, Luther would have been shorn of half his strength. The gifts of the two men fitted them admirably to complement each other. Luther was a man of tremendous force, but impulsive, rough, often unwise; Melanchthon's mildness, caution and charity supplied a much-needed corrective. On the other hand, Melanchthon's timidity and irresolution, and his ingrained tendency to compromise, would sometimes have led to disaster had they not been fortunately overruled by the promptness and audacity of Luther. The Reformation had need of the scholars no less than of the plain people, and that it won both was due to the fact that Luther and Melanchthon were coworkers so long and so heartily. Without the scholar's pen to supplement the reformer's voice, the Reformation might have failed.

Luther well knew Melanchthon's value and was conscious of his friend's superiority in many ways. Whatever his faults, petty jealousy was not a weakness of the great leader, and he bore witness often to his friend's excellences of mind and heart. He urged the publication of Melanchthon's lectures on the Epistle to the Colossians, and wrote a preface for them in which he said: "I have been born to war and fight with factions

[1] Luther thought it next to Holy Scripture, and that it even deserved a place in the Canon. CR, 21: 77. Cochlæus called it "a new Alcoran," as much more hurtful than Luther's "Babylonian Captivity" as Melanchthon's style was sweeter, his genius nobler and his skill greater than Luther's.

and devils, and therefore my books are stormy and warlike. I must root out the stumps and stocks, cut away the thorns and hedges, fill up the ditches, and am the rough forester, to break a path and make things ready. But master Philip walks gently and silently, tills and plants, sows and waters with pleasure, as God has gifted him richly." A better piece of self-criticism and of generous appreciation of a fellow was never penned.

But a result even more important than the translation of the New Testament came from this residence at the Wartburg. This enforced retirement gave opportunity for Luther's work to go on without him, and for new developments to occur. It occasioned a great change in him, a change in the whole movement, and a change in his relations to it; and all these changes were of the most serious and lasting character. This Wartburg "captivity" as it is called, often thought of as an incident of no great importance in Luther's life, was really a turning-point of the Reformation. It gave room for the expansion and new adjustment of things. Above all, it gave Luther time and seclusion in which to develop more fully his own ideas. Hitherto he had been borne along by events; henceforth he must direct events. He must decide upon a policy, instead of being a mere opportunist, for it was clear to him by this time that if he lived it must be to become the leader of a great movement. It was a new Luther that returned from the Wartburg to Wittenberg.

Luther had begun his work as reformer with no training in public affairs, and he had no such native talent for politics as Zwingli possessed to make good his lack of experience. He had lived in the cloister and among books, and his studies had been theological. His life had made him as unfitted for practical organization as it had admirably prepared him to be the spiritual guide of men. He lacked elementary knowledge of secular life, and so could have no insight into the needs of the German people, still less could he comprehend the weakness of the Empire and the necessity of political reconstruction. As the shrewdest and most experienced men of his generation did not appreciate the economic and social changes that were going on, we should not regard Luther's lack of vision as a fault; still, we must bear in mind that all this was hidden from him. But, like most men of little experience in affairs, Luther's confidence in his political wisdom was always in inverse ratio to his knowledge; he was ever ready to give advice as to how the great affairs should be conducted, and equally ready with his blame when his advice was not heeded. At the Wartburg he began that course of interference with political administration and ecclesiastical organization which make his later years as a reformer so different from his earlier, and in the end

led him to the practical denial of nearly every principle that he had affirmed.

The seminal idea of the Reformation, as an organized movement, is found in Luther's "Address to the Christian Nobility." In this, it will be remembered, he had strenuously maintained that all Christians are priests, and that the ecclesiastical power cannot therefore claim a superiority over the temporal. He had called on the princes and rulers to undertake necessary reforms, and especially to prevent the further robbery of their people by the Pope, through annates and other exactions. But the principle is only suggested, not fully stated, still less worked out. That Luther was to do gradually, in the light of events. He had now progressed a stage further in his thinking; his own protection by Elector Frederick against the combined power of Pope and Emperor, made still clearer to him the method by which a reformation might be had—the only method, he thought, by which reformation should be attempted. While at the Wartburg he thought out and prepared for the press a supplement to the "Address," which he entitled, "Warning to all Christians to Abstain from Rebellion and Sedition." His object is to maintain the principle, to which he had now come and from which he never thereafter departed, that the civil rulers had both the right and the duty to undertake the reformation of the Church, and that any other method was impracticable and dangerous. "I leave the secular authorities and nobility to undertake the matter," he says, "since it is within the scope of their regular authority to do this, each prince and lord in his own domain." That which comes within the scope of regular authority cannot be stigmatized as rebellion. But, he complains, the princes will not perform their duty—"they let it all go, one hinders another." Nevertheless, until they are ready to move, "it is the duty of the common man to quiet his mind and to say that he will abstain from desire and word, turn away from rebellion, and not undertake the matter without command of the ruler or assistance of the government." That there may be no mistaking his meaning, Luther says this again and again, with little change of words: "Therefore have regard to the rulers. So long as they undertake nothing and give no command, keep quiet with hand, mouth and heart, and undertake nothing. If you can persuade rulers to undertake and command, you may do it. If they will not, you also should not. But if you proceed, you are wrong and much worse than the other party." He makes it clear why he takes this position and gives this counsel: to do otherwise would in the end cause greater evils than those it was sought to abolish. "I hold and will always hold with the party that shuns rebellion, however much injustice it must suffer, and against that party that rebels, however just its cause. Because, there can be no rebellion without the shedding

of innocent blood and shame." This advice, after his usual manner, Luther proceeds to support by citation of numerous passages of Scripture.[1]

This tract bears date January 19, 1522, which is probably the date when it was finished and sent to Wittenberg; doubtless it was not printed until some months later. Why should Luther have interrupted his labors at the Wartburg, and especially his translation of the New Testament, on which he was now busily engaged, by the composition of such a tract? No doubt this is only the normal development of his views, but even if we knew nothing of the facts we should suspect that such development had been stimulated by events in the outside world, news of which had been brought to Luther by his correspondents. Such we know to have been the fact. While he was living in quiet on his Patmos, important things were doing in Wittenberg.

Even with Luther away, Wittenberg with its growing aggressive university was the center, the heart, of the Reformation. New thoughts had been put into men's minds; new aspirations, new purposes had come into their hearts. The leaven must work. A town, especially a great school of learning, gets to itself a character; hardly less than a man it has a soul, a will, a purpose. Luther was absent, but the spirit that he had called up was still at Wittenberg and could not be idle. He had long preached against the mass—and gone on celebrating it. Another, and a less conservative teacher, must begin the embodiment of the new teaching. The new leader was Gabriel Zwilling, chaplain of the Augustinian convent, a bold, zealous, eloquent man, who at first had the full confidence of the people. Melanchthon said of him (Dec. 27, 1521), "He preaches so purely, so simply, that it would be hard to find anybody to compare with him." This Gabriel came to new thoughts about the mass; that it ought to be abolished, that it was a sin to celebrate it. The members of the convent, the prior excepted, agreed with him. The prior asserted his authority, the monks rebelled; the Elector interfered and referred the case to the university. The university decided in favor of Gabriel and the monks, Melanchthon writing the opinion.[2] The Elector, however, opposed innovations and the mass continued for a time. This was in October, 1521.

The zealous Gabriel, balked in one thing, turned to another. This

[1] LDS, 22: 43 *seq.*

[2] It is signed also by Jonas, Carlstadt, Schurf and Amsdorf. See the collection of documents, including the reply of the Elector, in Walch, 15: 1948 *seq.* The admirers of Luther have represented Carlstadt as introducing these changes because of his restless spirit and his ambition for leadership. But these documents show clearly that if he took the lead, six other professors fully sustained him; and he acted with the full authority of the town council of Wittenberg. It is indisputable, however, that the changes were very distasteful to the Elector; and though he did not actively interfere, he did what he could to restrain the haste of the Wittenbergers to make innovations.

time his attack was on monachism itself, and as the result of his preaching thirteen monks left the monastery. It was the first fruits of the Reformation; the spirit of reform was fast changing into the spirit of revolution. The obstinate (or brave) prior was overawed by the turbulent feeling. Students entered the chapel December 3d, and expelled the priests who were preparing to read mass. No one knew what they would do next, and disturbing rumors were circulated. The university authorities had the offending students arrested, but nothing could stop the incoming wave. Carlstadt now took the lead. "What madness," he said, "to think that we must leave the Reformation to God alone. A new order of things is beginning. The hand of man must interfere." He announced that on the first day of the new year he would celebrate the Lord's Supper after the ancient manner and in both kinds. When opposition threatened he anticipated the time and held the service on Christmas Day. A beginning was made; opposition was silenced and Carlstadt had his way. On New Year's Day and the following Sunday and thereafter the new (or old) rite was celebrated in Wittenberg. One of the Elector's counsellors accused Carlstadt of self-seeking; he replied: "Mighty Lord, there is no form of death that can make me withdraw from Scripture. The word has come upon me with such promptitude that woe is me if I preach it not."

Priests were marrying, monks were leaving their monasteries, the mass was giving place to the Lord's Supper, images were condemned and thrust out of the churches. Things were going too fast for the Elector, too fast for Luther. In his quiet retreat at the Wartburg he wrote against the mass and against monkish vows, but how great a step there is between condemning old customs in our hearts and changing them with our hands—between the thought and the act! Luther did not like what had been done. He said: "They have introduced changes in the mass and images, attacked the sacrament and other things that are of no account, and have let faith and love go; just as though all the world hereabout had great understanding in these matters, which is not the fact; and so they have brought it about that many pious people have been stirred up to do what is really the devil's work. It would, indeed, be a good thing to begin such changes, if we could all together have the needful faith; and if they suited the church in such measure that no one should take offense at them. But this can never be. We cannot all be learned as Carlstadt. Therefore we must yield to the weak; otherwise those who are strong will run far, and the weak who cannot follow them at like pace will be run down." [1] This he said in a letter

[1] De Wette, 2: 118. It is difficult to understand how Luther persuaded himself that he had any ground of complaint; Carlstadt and others were only doing what

to the Wittenbergers in December, 1521. It was not by him, but by men of a different type, that this practical work was to be begun. There was need of Zwilling and Carlstadt. It was one of those occasions when fanatics do a real service for mankind. Strong in their own convictions, seeing only one thing, reckless of all consequences, they are brave where wise men stand appalled. With no misgiving they kindle a fire that may wrap the world in flame. But for what they did at Wittenberg, Luther's preaching and writing might have ended in preaching and writing. Something was to be done, and they did it!

But fanatics, sometimes useful in precipitating a conflict, are useless and dangerous in everything else. They can raise a storm, some one else must direct it; they may pull down, others must build up. At Wittenberg extravagance soon reached an alarming height—the native fanaticism was reinforced by fanaticism from abroad. There came from Zwickau three men who claimed to be prophets,[1] and turned the heads of many. They greatly puzzled Melanchthon, who wrote to the Elector: "Your highness knows how many and what dangerous dissensions have been stirred up at Zwickau about the word of God. And some there who have made what changes I know not have been cast into prison. Three of the authors of these commotions have fled thither, two weavers, uneducated men, the third a scholar. I have heard them. They say wonderful things of themselves: that they have been commissioned to teach by a clear voice from God; that they hold familiar converse with God; that they see into the future; briefly, that they are prophetic and apostolic men. I can hardly say how much they affect me. Many considerations make me unwilling to despise them. It is evident from many reasons that there are spirits in them, but no one save Martin can judge of them." He thought the Gospel was in danger, and wished the Elector to bring it about that Luther should see the prophets. This letter was written December 27th, and the same day Melanchthon wrote to Spalatin a letter of similar import, only emphasizing his anxiety.[2]

The prophets denounced the Church as then existing; taught the invalidity of infant baptism; that nothing had been rightly carried on in the Church, because it was under the control of evil men; that God had determined to destroy the generation then living and raise up another

he had clearly taught in his "Misuse of the Mass," and avowed his own intention of doing in a letter to Melanchthon the preceding August 1st. He had distinctly avowed his purpose to seek the restoration of the eucharist in both kinds, and declared that he will never again celebrate a private mass. De Wette, 2: 36.

[1] These prophets, not known except for a short time, were Nicolas Storch and Marcus Thomae, the weavers, and Marcus Stübner, the scholar. Some say there were not two by the name of Marcus, but one Marcus Thomae Stübner—not a very important matter. Gieseler, 4: 62; Schaff, 6: 380.

[2] CR, 1: 513; cf. 518, 533. The letter is given in full in Richard's "Philip Melanchthon," pp. 86, 87.

endued with righteousness. They boasted that they had the gift of foreknowledge and of judging secret things.[1] Sometimes revelations came to them in dreams, sometimes, rarely, in open vision. No one was to give himself to art or to literature, or study to learn; he was only to seek revelation from God, who had no need of human help.

All these things are very like what was taught by the Taborites, the fanatical wing of the Husites, a hundred years before. From the similarity of doctrines some have supposed that the men from Zwickau descended from the Taborites, but of this there is no direct proof. In process of time the Taborites lost most of their extravagances, and became a quiet, uninteresting people; and besides, the spontaneous uprising of such parties was no new thing in the history of the Church. Given the same general conditions, the same general phases of doctrine appear. Few things have stood more in the way of a clear understanding of the history of the Church than the supposition that all similar phenomena must be linked together by an unbroken chain of succession. Men hold Arian views who never heard of Arius. There are ecstatic prophets who did not descend from the Montanists. If we must have an explanation of the rise of the Zwickau prophets, we need not look further than the unrest of the times, the rejection of all ecclesiastical developments, and the attempt with the New Testament alone for a guide to organize a new primitive Christianity. Such attempts have invariably been attended by extravagances, which however are usually corrected by experience. Happy would it be if the truth that extravagant parties almost always hold should not be obscured and discredited by the folly that they mix with it!

The effect produced by the preaching of the new prophets was just such as might have been expected. The people, having lost their hold on the old, were ready to take up with anything that came with a plausible face. Even the most prudent were afraid to condemn anything that might have truth in it, and especially were they unwilling to reject anything that seemed to be taught in Scripture.[2] It was hard to draw the line between that which was local and temporary in the early Church

[1] Stübner said, "Martin is right on most points, but not on all. Another will come after him with a better spirit. The Turks shall soon take possession of Germany. All priests shall be slain if they now take wives. In a short time, about five, six or seven years, there shall be such a change in the world that no ungodly or sinful men shall remain alive. Then there shall be one way, one baptism, one faith. The baptism of infants, as now administered, before they have reason, is no baptism." Gieseler, 4: 62.

[2] Spalatin, who was present at the Elector's council when this matter was considered, relates that Frederick said: "This is a most weighty and difficult affair, which I as a layman do not profess to understand. God has given to me and my brother considerable wealth, but if I could obtain a right understanding of this matter, I declare that I would rather take my staff in my hand and quit everything I possess, than knowingly resist the will of God." Walch, 15: 1978.

and that which was permanent and universal. It was harder still to mark the limits of promise or prophecy. The new prophets seemed to have some support for their views in the New Testament—at least, it was difficult to show that they did not. They won many over to their party. The danger was so great that the Elector advised Amsdorf and Melanchthon not to mix with the people. Carlstadt went entirely over. He and Zwilling and George More, masters of the boys' school, ruined that school, and the university itself was threatened. They decried all human learning. Carlstadt went about asking the citizens to interpret passages from the prophets for him—the deep things were hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes! Learned men were not to be allowed to preach or to be priests; laymen and mechanics who could read were to become the teachers of the people. Of course this flood would subside, but who could resist its force or repair the damage of it?

Luther had been kept informed of what was going on at Wittenberg, and could not but be anxious as to the outcome of it all. In December (1521) he made a secret visit to his friends, strengthened them and returned to the Wartburg, himself somewhat reassured. It was after his visit that the prophets appeared, and he did not approve Melanchthon's doubt and timidity in dealing with them. He thought his friend ought not to have listened to them. They had done nothing and said nothing that might not have been inspired by Satan. He did not deny them prophetic gift and power.[1] Melanchthon had been troubled about infant baptism; he thought it a real question whether infants ought to be baptized; Augustine and others had disputed much about it and had not made the matter clear. The chief difficulty was whether the faith of parents would suffice for their children. The prophets said, No; and Luther himself had taught that there was no valid approach to the sacraments without faith. But now, in strengthening Melanchthon, he reaffirmed the old Augustinian doctrine that the faith of sponsors

[1] Luther to Melanchthon, June 13, 1522: "In regard to these prophets I cannot approve of your timidity, though you are my superior both in capacity and erudition. In the first place, when they bear record of themselves they ought not to be implicitly believed, but their spirits should be tried, as John admonishes. You know Gamaliel's advice, but I have heard of nothing said or done by them which Satan himself could not imitate. I would have you examine whether they can produce a proof of their commission, for God never sent anyone, not even his own Son, who was not either properly called to the office, or authorized by miracles. The ancient prophets were legally appointed; and their mere assertion of being called by a divine revelation is not sufficient warrant for receiving them, since God did not even speak to Samuel but with the authority of Eli. So much for their public character. You should also examine their private spirit, whether they have experienced spiritual distresses and conflicts with death and hell, and the power of regeneration. If you hear smooth, tranquil, and what they call devout and religious raptures, though they speak of being caught up to the third heavens, do not regard them while the sign of the Son of Man is wanting, the cross, the only touchstone of Christians, and the sure discerner of spirits." De Wette, 2: 124; Michelet, 114.

suffices for infants in baptism. He wrote to Spalatin not to let the Elector persecute the fanatics. As the trouble grew, especially when Carlstadt began to make changes, when the old order began to be broken up, and violence and tumult seemed about to sweep everything away, he could no longer remain in seclusion. He must come forth and restore order. Accordingly he left the Wartburg March 1st, without consulting the Elector, and on the 7th of the same month he was again in Wittenberg.[1]

His first business was to allay the passion for change. This he was to do, not by force of law, but by argument, by instruction, but still more by the commanding influence of his own strong spirit. The agency he employed was preaching. For eight days, beginning with the 8th and ending with the 16th of March, he preached to the people, rebuked, exhorted, persuaded them to observe moderation. It had been nearly a year since he had left them to go to Worms. Their hearts went with him there. His conduct before the Diet had stimulated their admiration, their love, their pride; his condemnation had excited their fear and increased their devotion; for a time uncertainty as to his fate had caused them the profoundest anxiety. The trouble and confusion of the last few months, the feeling that they knew not whither to go and that they had no one to guide them, made them think of him and wish for him as shipwrecked sailors wish for the day. And he had come! He was with them, he was speaking to them. Never did a preacher have a greater need to speak wisely, or a people to hear honestly. And Luther preached wisely. He did not blame them for what they did, but they had done it at the wrong time and in the wrong way. They had had faith, it may be, but they had not had charity. The word of God must be permitted to do its work without the help of man. Violence was not needed. He himself had used nothing but the word of God against the Pope, and yet no one for years had done the Pope so much harm.[2]

Luther also proclaimed in public for the first time the new idea of reformation that he had worked out at the Wartburg. The people of Wittenberg had done wrong to begin this work without the authority of their prince. Obedience was due to the government, and they must wait patiently until it was ready to begin the work of reform. Rebellion

[1] He wrote a letter at Borna, on the way to Wittenberg, March 5th, disclaiming further protection by the Elector. De Wette, 2: 137, Currie, 98. It is a characteristic blunder of Froude's that he should say, "The Elector of Saxony recalled him from Wartburg (*sic*), as he was no longer in personal danger, to take command in reorganizing the Church."—"Life and Letters of Erasmus," 313.

[2] The eight sermons are in LDS, 28: 202 *seq.*, and Walch, 20: 5 *seq.* A summary of the first five is given in Walch, 15: 1979. For Carlstadt's excuse of his conduct, see LDS, 64: 404, 408.

was one of the greatest sins of which Christian men could be guilty. They must retrace their steps; the things that had been changed must be changed back again. The mass, some few things omitted, was restored. Luther returned to the monastery and continued to be a monk. But those who chose to celebrate the Lord's Supper after Carlstadt's manner were to be permitted to do so. Even Luther could not undo all that had been done; overt acts had been committed, the power of custom had been broken, a beginning had been made. The work of Carlstadt was to remain and grow. Those who celebrated the Supper in both kinds multiplied; those who had cast off their monastic vows did not take them up again; and others followed their example. Images, broken or unbroken, continued to disappear from the churches. The fanatics had begun the work that Luther only preached about, and it could not be stopped.

The Luther that returned was not the Luther that had left Wittenberg. He was not the same in himself or in his relations to the movement of which he had been and still was the principal instigator. At Worms he was still in a sense a private person; no one was pledged to him and it was still uncertain whether his condemnation and death would not end the whole business. But he had been condemned and nothing came of it. When the first dazed feeling was over, men realized as they had not before realized that a great conflict had begun and that Luther was the leader of one party—the party of reform, the party of liberty. And no one felt this more keenly than Luther himself. The persuasion had been long growing in him that he was a divinely chosen instrument. He felt it when he burned the Pope's bull; he felt it at Worms; he felt it even more at the Wartburg. That was a very noteworthy letter of his to the Archbishop of Mainz. He had heard that indulgences were to be sold at Halle by the Archbishop's authority, and he wrote a book against it that the Elector Frederick would not permit him to publish. Thereupon he wrote to the Archbishop, December 1st:

> Your Electoral Grace: they have now set up again the idol in Halle, which takes away from poor simple Christians their money and their souls. Your Electoral Grace perhaps thinks that I have given up my plans . . . and that my mouth has been shut by his Imperial Majesty. Your Electoral Grace will be mindful of the beginning, what a terrible fire has grown out of the small despised spark, when all the world was so sure about it, and thought that the poor beggar was immeasurably too small for the Pope, and undertook impossibilities. But God has taken up this cause; he has given the Pope and his followers enough to do; against and above all the thought of the world he has carried the matter to a point from which the Pope will hardly be able to bring it back; it will grow worse with him daily, so that the work of God herein may be more clearly

> recognized. The same God lives still; let no one doubt it now; and he has the same skill to withstand a cardinal of Mainz, though four Emperors were to stand by him. He has also especial pleasure in breaking the lofty cedars, and abasing the haughty hardened Pharaohs. But let not your Electoral Grace think that Luther is dead; he will glory freely and joyously in the God who has humbled the Pope, and begin a game with the Cardinal of Mainz that he did not expect.

He demanded that the Archbishop should abolish the idol and let the married priests alone. He would wait fourteen days for a plain answer: if the answer did not come in that time the attack would be made. The Archbishop's letter in reply, dated December 21st, is not less remarkable than Luther's. He had received the letter, he said, and took it in good part, and the cause that moved Luther to write had been done away. He continues: "I will conduct and show myself, if God will, as becomes a pious Christian prince, so far as God shall give me grace, strength and understanding; for which I pray truly and will have prayer offered for me. I can do nothing of my own self and confess that I stand in need of the grace of God. I cannot deny that I am a poor sinful man, who may sin and err, and do daily sin and err." The Archbishop and the monk seem to have strangely changed places: it is the poor monk who threatens and commands, and the proud Lord who humbly obeys.[1]

When Luther at this time dealt with the Elector Frederick there was the same reversal of positions, except that Frederick was not quite so compliant. The Elector did not approve the attack on the Archbishop; he was afraid that the book might endanger the public peace; he did not wish it published, and directed Spalatin so to inform Luther. Luther was furious. He had never read a more disagreeable letter in his life. "I will not put up with it," he declared; "I will rather lose you and the prince himself and every living being. If I have stood up against the Pope, why should I yield to his creature?"[2] When we remember who Luther was, and who the Elector was, and how they were related to each other—that Luther at that moment was under the ban and owed his life to the Elector's care for him—his language seems at least extraordinary. He had reached a point where he was no longer willing to be controlled and where he felt no need of human protection. When he thought of returning to Wittenberg the Elector was unwilling for him to do so—his return would force his prince either to give him up or to banish him, or to protect him in defiance of the imperial edict. The Elector had therefore a right to be consulted as a friend, as well as obeyed as a prince.

[1] Both letters are given in full in Michelet, 104–107. Originals in Walch, 19: 548–553; Luther's letter only in De Wette, 2: 112.
[2] De Wette, 2: 94.

But Luther broke through all restraint; the need was imperative and he must go. He wrote to the Elector on the way: "This I know full well about myself: if matters stood so at Leipzig as at Wittenberg, I would ride thither, though for nine days it should rain only Duke Georges, and each one were ninefold more furious than this one." He did not wish the Elector to protect him: "I go to Wittenberg under far higher protection than that of the Elector. I have no intention of demanding protection from your Electoral Grace. Yea, I take it that I have more power to protect your Electoral Grace than you to protect me."

On his way to Wittenberg, he stopped at the Black Boar tavern at Jena, where the room in which he ate and drank is still shown to visitors. There a young Swiss, John Kessler by name, saw him. Kessler was going on to Wittenberg ahead of him, and Luther charged him with a message to his friend Schurf. "What name shall I give?" asked Kessler. "Simply tell him," Luther replied, " 'He that is to come salutes you,' " appropriating to himself that descriptive phrase which had been used only of Christ.[1]

It is difficult to interpret these things, unless on the hypothesis that Luther was laboring under an undue exaltation of spirit, a kind of intoxication of faith. It is only thus that we can acquit him of ingratitude, arrogance, and presumption akin to blasphemy. If he had been all the time at Wittenberg, there is no knowing how far he would have been borne along by the influences that led some of his friends into such extravagances as they committed. Possibly he might have gone with the foremost, or at least not have known what to do. But at the Wartburg he was out of the current, his advance was more natural, and the Wittenbergers outstripped him. The consequence was that he was put in an attitude first of resistance, then of opposition. He saw the effects of radicalism from afar, and when feeling but little the impulses by which the radicals were urged on. He was already by nature a conservative, quick to see wrong principles, but slow to change old customs. He became more conservative; he saw more clearly the necessity of moving cautiously. This conservatism of the acknowledged leader of the movement was the condition of success. Had he been led astray by false enthusiasm it is certain that the whole affair would have ended in failure. But making changes slowly, as men were able to bear them, accepting what had already been done in the right direction, and looking to other and more important changes, he kept the confidence and sympathy of the great body of his sober and earnest-hearted followers, and won others to his cause. It was of great service to him and the

[1] For a pleasing account of Luther's personality during this period, see the story of Kessler, *Sabbata*, 1: 145–151; tr. in *Bib. Sac.* for Jan., '93: 114–119: also in "Schönberg-Cotta Family," ch. 18.

Reformation that he was far away from Wittenberg for a time, free from misleading influences, and not compelled to act at the crisis of change. What he did when he returned shows how necessary he was to the work he had begun. He did what he alone could do. Partly by his wise preaching, partly by the influence of his commanding personality and peculiar position, he restored order. The radical leaders felt and yielded to his power. "Gabriel is changed into another man," Luther wrote; Carlstadt was overawed, and the prophets left the city—the threatened danger was averted.

Melanchthon thought Luther alone capable of judging the prophets, and Luther had an opportunity to judge of them. After a time they returned to Wittenberg, and he saw three of them. He calmly listened to Stübner as he told his story. When he had finished, Luther saw that what he had said could not be refuted: reason and argument had nothing to do with the case. He replied, that these were either the vaporings of an excited imagination, or the wild hurtful suggestions of a deceiving, lying spirit. Thereupon, Cellarius, greatly excited, stamping with his feet and striking the table with his hands, and generally with violent gesticulation, cried out that Luther had dared to say such things of a divine man. Stübner, more self-contained, said, "Luther, that you may know that I am indued with the Spirit of God, I will tell you the thought that is in your mind: you are half inclined to believe that my doctrine is true." Luther hastily exclaimed, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" The prophet had exactly divined his thought, as he afterwards confessed, but without convincing him that the divination was the result of inspiration, unless it was the inspiration of the Evil One. Having no more to say, Luther dismissed them, and they went out threatening and glorying. Afterwards they sent him a letter full of execrations and cursings. He was puzzled. It was easy for him to believe that the prophets were under the influence of a supernatural Power; he evidently did believe so much. The only real question in his mind was as to the nature of the Power, was it good or evil? This was after he had had time to think the matter over and fortify himself against surprises; what would he have done if he had been in Melanchthon's place, suddenly facing a new difficulty, trying pretended spirits? Possibly he would have done just as he did later, but it is well that he was not put to the test.

Rid of the prophets, it was a more delicate thing to deal with Carlstadt, so long his colleague in the university and one of his earliest helpers. The little, dark, restless, ambitious, excitable man had been in a very trying position. Luther, coming later to the university, the younger man, had not so much overshadowed him as thrust him aside. He had been first, or at least the equal of any. Now Luther was first, even the

young Melanchthon was before him. Accustomed to lead, he could not contentedly follow. He looked critically upon what Luther did and taught, blamed his hesitation, ridiculed the notion that doing nothing themselves they ought to wait for God to act. He took advantage of Luther's absence to assert himself and again take the lead. In his position of acknowledged preëminence, Luther could afford to be generous, to sympathize with Carlstadt's feelings and to deal tenderly with him. In censuring what he had done, Luther did not mention his name, but could not help wounding him. He wrote (March 30th): "I have offended Carlstadt by annulling his ordinances, although I do not condemn his doctrine, except that he has busied himself in merely external things, to the neglect of true Christian doctrine, that is, faith and charity. For by his unwise way of teaching he has led the people to feel that the only thing they have to do to be Christians is to communicate in both kinds, take the bread and cup in their hands, neglect confession and break images." Carlstadt could not well remain in Wittenberg. He stayed a little time and then withdrew to a village near by, bought a farm, became a peasant among peasants. However, he soon tired of his farmer life and took up again his teaching at the university; but he was hopelessly out of sympathy with the work there, and again left, this time to become pastor at Orlamund, where he carried on his schemes of reform. There he also taught his new theory of the Lord's Supper, that the body of Christ is not literally present in the bread. In this he anticipated Zwingli and thus early began one of the many divergent lines of Protestantism. He also became, but not consistently, an opponent of infant baptism, which has led some to class him with the Anabaptists.

Luther was much offended at these new innovations and teachings.[1] He followed Carlstadt to his new home and preached against him. Carlstadt offered to hold a public disputation on the questions about which they disagreed, at Wittenberg or Erfurt, and Luther consented, but nothing ever came of the agreement. At Orlamund Luther informed the people that neither the university nor the Elector would consent to their having Carlstadt as their pastor. The people replied that he was their pastor, that they had chosen him, and that according to Luther's own teaching a people had the right to choose their own pastor. When Carlstadt came into the room where the conference was

[1] Luther says of him, in a report to Caspar Güttel, prior of the Augustinians at Eisleben, March 30, 1522, "His ambition is to set up as a new doctor on his own account, and to establish his rule and system on the ruin of my authority." This shows exactly where the shoe pinched Luther. In the light of that statement, no one can doubt that jealousy of Carlstadt actuated his entire conduct toward his older colleague, from the time of his return to Wittenberg. De Wette, 2: 177; Walch, 15: 2016. Cf. *Tischreden*, No. 283.

held, Luther ordered him to leave; Carlstadt refusing, he ordered his servant to make ready his luggage and he would leave himself—he would not stay in the same room with Carlstadt. The behavior of the two men was in striking contrast: Carlstadt was courteous, he did not forget himself or the occasion; as he was at home he insisted on entertaining Luther, but the latter refused the invitation promptly and abruptly. Luther's whole conduct was so overbearing and insulting that he aroused the indignation of the people, and he was finally glad to get out of the town without being stoned.[1] In a little while the order came for the banishment of Carlstadt and he was forced to leave a flock tenderly attached to him. He wrote a farewell address to the people, signed "Andrew Bodenstein, expelled by Luther, unheard and unconvicted." When the address was read the people heard it weeping.

Banished from Orlamund and from Saxony, and without means of support, the unfortunate man suffered much from anxiety and much from want.[2] One of the first reformers, he was the first to feel the bitterness, not of papal, but of Lutheran intolerance. At last, in 1531, he found a home among the Swiss, and ten years more of useful life in the university of Basel. When he broke with Luther, or when Luther threw him over, he ceased to be a directing force in the new movement, and became of little historic interest. He could no longer be useful at Wittenberg; his presence there would have occasioned division, and division would have ruined all. We sympathize with his sufferings, we are indignant at Luther for his intolerant persecution of the man who had dared to differ from him, as he had himself dared to differ from the Pope, and yet we can hardly see how the result could have been otherwise. It was one of those cases where the innocent must suffer for the high crime and misdemeanor of being in advance of his contemporaries; the truth must wait; the time was not ripe. One who saw Carlstadt in his disputation with Eck at Leipzig said of him that he had the same qualities that were found in Luther, only less. He was a learned, candid, unselfish, brave man, and an enthusiast for the new light. At the time of his death in 1541, he was professor of theology at Basel.[3]

[1] For the account of Luther's interview with Carlstadt, see Walch, 15: 2029 and 2039. Luther afterwards caused the reporter, Martin Reinhard, to be turned out of his living at Jena, on the ground that the record was too favorable to Carlstadt. See also Luther to Spalatin, October 30th; Walch, 15: 2626.

[2] In 1525 Carlstadt was badly off. June 26th of that year Melanchthon wrote: "Carlstadt has written here pleading letters. It will be our business lovingly to help him. His wife, I suppose, will come to the city to-morrow, for we invited her yesterday, and we will strive with the greatest faith and diligence that she may not want for anything."—CR. 1: 751.

[3] Barge's very thorough and scholarly biography (*Andreas Bodenstein non Carlstadt*, 2 vols. Leipzig, 1905) vindicates his character from the aspersions of Luther and the Lutherans, and shows him in his true light as the most logical and scriptural of the Wittenberg group.

In these first weeks at Wittenberg after his return, we see Luther at his best and at his worst. His eloquence, his zeal, his capacity for leadership, were never more clearly in evidence. There was none that could match him "in sovereign sway and masterdom." But what has become of the diffident monk, who consented to leave the shelter of the cloister only at the imperious command of his general; who was so burdened by the sense of his ignorance that he declared himself unworthy to be a doctor of theology; who was so conscious of his spiritual weakness that he thought he could not live a year as the religious guide of the people of Wittenberg? He has utterly disappeared, and his place has been taken by a man of overweening self-sufficiency, arrogant, intolerant of advice, opposition or rivalry, a born leader of men it is true, but also quite determined henceforth to lead. He has tasted of the sweets of power, and

> increase of appetite had grown
> By what it fed on.

He has drunk the new wine of popular applause, and the heady beverage has intoxicated him, and given him an insatiable craving for still deeper draughts. A new Luther indeed!

CHAPTER II

A NEW POPE AND AN OLD GRIEVANCE

LUTHER'S exigencies, in his contention with the Pope, had forced him into an apparent radicalism that was not the real voice of his nature, and could not be his permanent course. He had uttered sweeping opinions in favor of freedom of conscience, liberty of private judgment, the sole authority of Scripture, and the priesthood of all believers—opinions that contained logical implications of which he was at the time unconscious, and that he rejected as soon as others, more logical than he, attempted to realize them. He was by temperament a conservative, and after he had finally broken with the Papacy and become the head of an openly schismatic party, his native conservatism at once began to assert itself. His policy at Wittenberg after his return expresses the real Luther better than much of his earlier writing.

Elector Frederick had strongly opposed the return of Luther, and feared that he might be much embarrassed by this reappearance and renewed activity. But he might have spared himself considerable anxiety; as events turned out, the Emperor and the Pope were much too busy elsewhere to devote considerable attention just then to affairs in Germany. And it may be shrewdly suspected that they preferred Luther and his conservatism to Carlstadt and his radicalism, and did not greatly desire Luther's removal from the control of affairs at that particular juncture. It is clear to us now, and was becoming clear to them then, that had Luther been put to death at Worms there would have been a much more radical revolt in Germany than anything that he desired or was ready to tolerate. Forces had been set at work that no other could control. Could Luther himself guide the spirit that he had raised? A revolution was threatened; what would that revolution accomplish?

In every country in Europe, Church and State were closely united. They were looked upon as a sort of Siamese twins, whose separation would be the death of both. The Church in each State was a part of the Church universal, a great undivided and indivisible whole, over which was the Pope as its representative and head. Its relations to the Pope were like those of the Empire to the Emperor, except that they were closer, more real, and supposed to be more vital. The new movement in the Church was following the political movement in Europe; it was in the direction of national growth, and the strengthening of the national

spirit. No one thought of breaking the connection of Church and State; no one, at least, except a few who were regarded as impractical and dangerous fanatics. It was the position of the Pope as the head of the visible Church that was threatened. It was a movement for the overthrow of a power that had outlived its usefulness, and which, in its efforts to preserve its influence, had usurped new functions, made new exactions, and thrown itself athwart the course of a normal and necessary development.

The state of things in Germany was favorable to such a movement. The Popes, in their dealings with the German Church, had abused their power, and had thus weakened their hold on the German people. Besides, they had come to be recognized as the representatives of Italian unity, and naturally their claims of tribute and tithes seemed like the laying of a tax on Germans for the benefit of Italians. This tax was paid with reluctance, often with a sense of humiliation.

But what could be done? There could be no simultaneous uprising of all Germany against the Papacy. It so happened, however, that the friends of reform were unequally distributed. In some sections there were few; in others they were almost the entire population. This fact was important, for Germany was rather a confederation than a solid kingdom; and each State might decide for itself what position it would take toward Luther and the Pope. If, for example, the Elector of Saxony should decide to defy the Pope, he could do so; he was almost supreme in his own dominions. He might, upon occasion, resist even a decree of the Empire. The idea of imperial unity had, indeed, been growing, but the old feudal notion that no prince was bound except by his own word, still held over. A majority of the imperial Diet might be against him, but nevertheless he was his own man and might not choose to submit, except to force. In that case, the States that had voted against him must make war upon him. In the first instance, then, the question of enforcing the ban against Luther was referred to the ruler of the State in which he was found. If he did not enforce it, the question might be brought before the Diet. If the Diet did not enforce it, the Emperor was to act, but he must act through the Diet. His influence in the Diet, however, was great. It was the influence of a powerful ruler, who, in virtue of his position, might reward his friends and crush his opponents. In a nearly evenly divided Diet, it was not difficult for him to command a majority; and therefore, in Germany, divided into two strong parties, one for and one against the Pope, the fate of Luther was virtually in the hands of the Emperor. But powerful as he was, such was his position in relation to other powers and to his own States, that he had to regulate his conduct by changing circumstances. In the last resort,

he alone could execute the ban, but he could do it only when he was at peace with his neighbors. He would not dare to make war upon a party in Germany while he was engaged in a foreign war; and he would not be willing to fight the Pope's battle unless the Pope was in sympathy with him; and the Pope might be against him—in alliance, it may be, with his enemies.

This position of the Emperor determined the development of the Lutheran movement on the political side. If we know how the Emperor was situated at any given time with reference to the Pope and other rulers, we know how he was shaping his policy toward the reform and the reformers. If he was at war with France, or with the Turks, or at outs with the Pope, Luther's party had peace. If he was at peace with other powers and the Pope, then we know that the Lutherans were in danger. His natural position toward them was one of repression, and he was always moving against them unless there was something to hold him back.

The forces that might be against the Emperor were few, and the relations of parties to each other are easily understood. Europe was divided between four great powers: first the Empire, including Spain and her dependencies belonging to the Emperor; second France, third England, fourth Italy, including the papal States. We should, perhaps, include as a fifth European power the Turks, with their seat at Constantinople. The principal sovereigns of Europe were men of exceptional ability. They all came to the throne young, and all reigned a long time. The eldest of them was Henry VIII (1509–1546); the next was Francis I (1515–1547); after him came Charles V (1519–1555); and then Suleiman II, head of the Ottoman Empire (1520–1566). In the great European struggle Henry VIII was probably the least important. A great figure in his own kingdom, on the Continent he appeared several times in a subordinate, never in a principal, part. He did not even hold, as he claimed to do, the balance of power between the two principal rivals. Suleiman II was always a menace, and at times exerted a directing influence on the course of events.

In the beginning the contest was between the Emperor and Francis I. There was only six years' difference in their ages, but at that time, when as much as at any time in history men were early distinguished, six years counted for much. Charles V at twenty-one was comparatively a novice, and Francis at twenty-seven was already a veteran. In comparing the two at the time of the election of Emperor, the Archbishop of Trier spoke of the one as a youth, of the other as "a great commander," a soldier "whose valor was already known and tried." Both had been educated in reference to their station; but the French king

was a man of more culture than the Emperor; he wished to be considered a patron of learning, a representative of the Renaissance. In natural qualities they were different: Charles was slow, plodding, cautious; he formed his plans with deliberation and worked them out with patient tenacity of purpose. He cared more for success than for fame, and hence only planned campaigns and trusted others to command his armies. He was more of a statesman than a soldier—a characterization, however, that applies more to the beginning than to the middle and end of his career. Francis, on the other hand, was a soldier from the first; he coveted military distinction, and preferred to lead his armies in person. He knew how to plan, but he lacked steadiness and efficiency in execution—he usually began well and ended badly. In the long run, Charles was nearly always successful; in the long run Francis nearly always failed. In that active, transitional period, occasion for war between two such rulers and rivals could not long be wanting—if there had been no differences, they would have found or made them. But there were differences: they inherited conflicting claims, and Italy was to be the scene of much of the contest between them.

The presence of contending foreign powers in Italy made the Pope's position one of delicacy and difficulty. Italy had no natural political head, no great central, national interest that might diminish or keep in check local rivalries and jealousies. State was divided against State, faction against faction. These antagonisms were fostered and intensified by foreign influence: there was a French interest, and a Spanish or Imperial interest, and this must continue as long as French and Spanish had conflicting claims in Italy. There could be no peace, much less could there be a genuine national sentiment. The Pope, as an Italian prince, might be tempted to make interest for himself or his family by favoring now one, now the other of the great rivals. He did not always successfully resist the temptation. But at times he rose above any personal motives, and as a patriot chafed at the presence of a disturbing influence in his country. He could not be pleased that either Francis or Charles should have permanent possessions; and, for that reason, whichever one was successful, he might be expected after a while to favor the other. He could not be neutral: the interests of the States of the Church, of which he was ruler, were often at stake; and even if his possessions, as the greatest Italian power, had imposed on him no responsibility, he must yet take part in the struggles going on about him. He had, or seemed to have, no choice in the matter, except of the party with which he would act; and his political interests and his duties as Pope did not always coincide—the Pope as Italian prince was sometimes in opposition to the Pope as head of the Church. This

opposition of interests, the result of natural and unforeseen developments, was a chief cause of the Pope's weakness. If the situation of Italy had been different, or if, as in former times, the Pope had been simply the head of the Church, the course of general history might have been different.

The interference of Francis I in Italy began with his accession to the throne; to his title as King of France he added that of Duke of Milan, and immediately proceeded to make it good. The Emperor Maximilian, Ferdinand of Spain, Florence and Milan, a strong force of Swiss and finally the Pope, joined together to oppose him. On his part he had the active aid of Venice and Genoa, and of hired troops, many of them Germans. If the allies had acted together and with vigor he must have been defeated, but as no one of them had any definite and certain interest in the matter their movements were hesitating, slow and without concert. While they were expecting him to cross the Alps at one place he crossed at another supposed to be impassable, and entered Italy with an army the like of which for discipline and equipment that age had not seen. To meet this army only the Swiss were in position, and for a time it was not certain that they would not make a separate treaty with the French and return home without a battle. The attempts at negotiation failing left the Swiss divided, and a part of them withdrew from the field, leaving, however, a force of thirty-five thousand resolute men to stand between Francis and Milan. The battle was joined at Marignano, September 13, 1515, and after a stubborn conflict the Swiss were defeated and Milan became a French possession.

This victory of the French made the Pope's situation alarming, since there was now no force adequate to meet Francis, and the extent of his conquests apparently depended entirely on his will. The Pope determined at once to come to an understanding with him; they could be of mutual service. The King had the advantage of position, and his conditions could not be called easy: he insisted on having Parma and Piacenza, as naturally connected with Milan. In return for these possessions of the Pope, he would take Florence and the Medici under his protection, and would require Milan to purchase salt from the States of the Church. In a personal interview between Francis and Leo at Bologna, it was further arranged that the Pragmatic Sanction, which for nearly a hundred years had protected the French clergy from the domination of the Pope, should be abolished. In return, the Pope conceded that the King should have the right to nominate to all ecclesiastical benefices, and to decide ecclesiastical questions, some few excepted, without appeal to Rome. The annates, or first year's income of every see on the appointment of a new bishop, were to go to the Pope.

Pope and King thus divided between them the rights of the French clergy.[1]

The treaty thus made gave a few years of peace to Italy. Francis held possession of all that he had acquired, and Leo had leisure to patronize literature and art. It was evident, however, that the Papacy would not rest content until at least Parma and Piacenza had been regained, if indeed it did not join in an attempt to drive the French out of Italy. The election of Charles V as Emperor suggested an alliance with him as the coming man in Europe, and a treaty was concluded between Leo and Charles May 8, 1521. It is probably more than a mere coincidence that this is the date given by the Emperor to the Edict of Worms against Luther, and the edict was no doubt prepared on that day, though not actually issued until May 26th. Leo did not live, however, to witness the success of Charles and the driving of the French out of Italy. The decisive defeat of Pavia was yet four years distant when Leo suddenly died, December 1, 1521, under circumstances that gave rise to a strong suspicion of poison, which is strengthened by the fact that there had been an unsuccessful attempt against his life before, for which several men in high position, among them a cardinal, were executed.[2] Another account attributes Leo's death to a cold caught in witnessing the celebration of the recent victory over the French. The Pope had doubted whether, as it was a victory of Christians over Christians, public rejoicings would be quite proper, and referred the case to his Master of Ceremonies, who replied that rejoicings would not be proper, unless the Pope felt that the Church had received some notable benefit from the victory. This punctilious regard to a matter of form fills out the picture of the times. A neglect of the highest moral considerations is fitly joined to a slavish observance of etiquette. When society is wanting in noble impulses it makes compensation by assiduous devotion to trifles.

At the time of his death Leo lacked ten days of completing his forty-sixth year. He had been Pope eight years, eight months and nineteen days. Circumstances had lifted him into a position of the greatest prominence. Few men of his time are oftener in men's thoughts, few names of the distant past are oftener on men's lips. His time has been named for him; "the age of Leo X" is celebrated as the golden period of literature, of art, of music—all that gives splendor to the Renaissance.

[1] This Concordat, in forty-eight articles, was ratified by the fifth Lateran council in December, 1516. The full text is in Mansi, 32: 1015–1046.

[2] Roscoe, "Leo X," 2: 69–76. The conspiracy was provoked by the injustice of the Pope. Cardinal Petrucci, who was executed, went to Rome under a safe-conduct from the Pope, which was immediately violated. One of the cardinals who was condemned and then pardoned, died shortly afterwards, suspected of being poisoned by the Pope. Two cardinals who confessed their guilt were let off with a fine of 25,000 ducats. The fact that so great an offense could be pardoned, or punished with only a fine, itself tells a tale.

It may be a question whether Leo was more helpful to learning than some of the Popes who preceded him and some who followed. Learning and art flourished before he came to the papal throne and after his death. It is enough to say that he was a great, possibly the greatest patron of learning in his time, but he was only one among many. He was himself a man of culture, speaking Latin fluently and elegantly, knowing Greek moderately well; a student of music, both as an art and as a science; a ready and agreeable speaker; a poet in a small way; a student of literature and of history, but much better acquainted with secular than with theological learning.[1] He was fond of hawking and hunting and fishing, and when engaged in these sports sometimes scandalized his Master of Ceremonies by his neglect of the proprieties, especially in the matter of dress. He loved cards and chess, but condemned dice. He sought to give dignity and elegance to public worship; he did not like long sermons.[2] In his expenditures, especially in his gifts, he was liberal. He loved to be amused, to laugh, and sometimes descended to coarse practical jokes.[3] In his political methods he was unscrupulous, not hesitating to use deception and artifice, and even to violate his word and the public faith to accomplish his purposes. The story is told that he once said, "All ages can testify how profitable that fable of Christ has been to us and our company." It is true the story rests on a single doubtful authority, but the fact that the story was told of him and found ready credence is itself significant. But withal he was a man of ability, much above the average of Popes. That he did not realize the gravity of the contest with Luther was not wholly his fault; that he did not suppress the Lutheran movement in its early stages is still less his fault. As an Italian prince, little could be said against him; as Pope his character and conduct go far toward explaining and justifying the revolt against the Papacy. He lacked scarcely any gift or accomplishment that a good secular ruler ought to have, and was almost everything that a Pope ought not to be. His sudden death, without the last rites of the Church, was held against him, even by many Catholics, as a sort of judgment on him. The cultivators of literature mourned his loss; the populace cared little for him.

[1] Sarpi and Pallavicini agree that he was more learned in other things than in theology. Sarpi says, after enumerating his many virtues: "He would have been a Pope absolutely complete, if with these he had joined some knowledge of things that concern religion, and some more propension unto piety, of both which he seemed careless." Hist. Council of Trent, bk. 1, The testimony of Pallavicini is in Roscoe, 2: 383, 384.

[2] In the year 1514 he ordered the Master of the Palace, on pain of excommunication, to see that the sermon did not exceed half an hour; and in the month of November, 1517, being wearied with a long discourse, he directed his Master of Ceremonies to remind the Master of the Palace that the council of the Lateran should not exceed a quarter of an hour, at most." Roscoe, 2: 508.

[3] Roscoe, 2: 399.

The cardinals present in the conclave found it impossible to choose one of their own number, and their choice fell on Adrian, the Cardinal Bishop of Tortosa, who chose to become Pope under his own name, and is known as Adrian VI. He was of humble birth, a native of Utrecht, who had risen solely by his own piety and worth, and at the time of his election held the highest and most responsible position at the Spanish court, being Regent in the Emperor's absence. He is supposed to have owed his election largely to the influence of Charles V, who admired and trusted him greatly. He was a learned man, of simple studious habits, deeply read in the scholastic theology, well advanced in age, conservative, of strong moral convictions but with little practical experience or wisdom. It was said of him as Cicero said of Cato that he was not a practical politician.[1] As he had not mingled much with men he was distrustful and hesitating, and had few intimates. It was said of him: "He is a man tenacious of his own and very careful what he gives, rarely or never receiving. He daily performs early mass. Whom he loves, or whether he loves anyone, no one has ever found out. He is not moved by anger nor relaxed by jokes." His elevation to the Papacy awakened in him no pride; on the contrary he groaned when the news was brought to him.[2] Everything conspired to make his position difficult. He was a stranger in Rome; he came having many offices to bestow; the expectations of place-hunters were high; and he was cautious in the distribution of his favors. He became unpopular; did not understand the situation; and keenly felt how sadly he and the times failed to agree.[3] The Church was corrupt; the Turks were invading Hungary and besieging Rhodes. Christendom was in danger from without, and the Lutherans were giving great trouble within.

Adrian's inexperience and helplessness made him an important factor in the new movement. He was sincerely anxious to reform the abuses of the Church, but when he began to take matters in hand he found how very difficult it was. There is little doubt that he came to Rome honestly desirous to cleanse the Augean stable of the Papacy, indeed, fully determined to do so; but when he attempted to suppress useless and costly offices he found that their holders had acquired by purchase what they protested was a vested right to them, and that to abolish an office would often be to reduce to poverty one who had invested in it his entire capital. Reservations and other abuses that had provoked so great criticism were similarly hedged about; when he proposed to inter-

[1] "With the very best intentions and the loftiest integrity, he sometimes injures the State; for he speaks as if he were in the republic of Plato, and not dealing with the Roman rabble." Letters to Athens, June, 90 B. C.

[2] Ranke, 1: 69.

[3] *Ib.*, 1: 74. He once said, "How much depends on the times in which even the best men are cast."

fere with such practices, the very princes who had protested again offered opposition, because they found their own patronage likely to be unduly circumscribed by the reform. Adrian was a scholastic theologian, a thorough believer in its methods, and from his point of view all that Luther taught seemed easy of refutation. He had himself written on indulgences, and had made the subject as simple and comprehensive as possible. He had taught that as indulgences are given in consideration of good works, and as good works are never perfectly performed by all, indulgences avail only in proportion to the completeness and sincerity with which the good works are done: a little good works, a little pardon; complete good works, complete pardon. So taught, indulgences would not encourage idleness and occasion scandal. He mentioned the matter to Cajetan, and proposed to issue a bull giving his views, which, he thought, would settle all dispute. Cajetan advised him not to publish such a bull; he himself had studied the subject, and had had two interviews with Luther, in which he had heard what Luther had to say. In his opinion the less said about indulgences the better. Whatever the Popes might say about them, he was convinced from a study of the Decretals "that indulgence is only an absolution from penance imposed in confession." He thought it would be better not to relax that penance, but to exact it strictly. When people should find themselves required to undergo a real penance they would see the advantage of indulgences; the golden age of the Church would return, the priest's authority would be reëstablished and all would be well.

The advice pleased the Pope, but the very first man to whom he mentioned it reminded him that the times were changed; that the people would not now endure the ancient discipline; that canonical punishments were out of date. The remedy indeed was suited to the disease, but the patient was too weak to bear it—it would kill rather than cure. The best thing would be not to say anything at all about the matter: "This matter, in these times, requireth silence, rather than further discussion." [1]

This opinion, too, very much struck the Pope, and passing by indulgences for the time he turned his attention to other things. Among these the question of marriage was very important. The papal law created impediments to the marriage of persons within certain degrees of relationship, natural or spiritual. It was often desirable to remove these impediments, which was done by dispensations, for which, of course, payment was to be made. The marriage law might well have been relieved of some of its restrictions, and Adrian wished to give the needed relief. But to do so was, it was said, to weaken the sinews of discipline; not to do so gave the Lutherans the opportunity to say that the restrictions were kept up, because to remove them would destroy the profitable

[1] Sarpi, pp. 19–21.

trade in dispensations. If, as was suggested, relief should be given to persons of quality, who most needed it, men would say that the Church in whose eyes all are equal, was legislating only for the benefit of the rich and noble. Besides, certain offices derived their revenues from this sale of dispensations; these offices had been sold, and to change the marriage laws would be to defraud the buyers. The offices might be bought back, but that would involve a great outlay of money.

The case of marriage was one of many. Hurtful customs had crept in, and had become part of a great, wide-reaching system. To change them was beset with difficulties. The correction of any evil would inflict a wrong scarcely less than the wrong redressed. There were many reasons why the Pope should act, and many why he should not act; whatever he might do the Church would suffer, and it would suffer if he did nothing. In his perplexity he turned from one to another. He felt that the complaints of the Lutherans were not without cause, and he thought that something ought to be done to remove that cause; but it was dangerous to confess evils, and more dangerous to attempt to correct them. His last adviser reminded him of this, and suggested the old method of resorting to the help of the secular power; forcible repression had availed in the past and would be useful again. Innocent III had put down the Albigenses, and later Popes had subdued the Waldenses and the Arnoldists by the use of sword and torture.

It was August before Adrian reached Rome, seven months after his election. After reaching the city his progress had been slow; he had done nothing toward reforming abuses; he did not know where to begin, or whether he should begin at all.[1] But while he was hesitating, the current of events was moving on. In particular, the German Diet was to meet, and he must be represented in it, and have something to lay before it. At a meeting of the Consistory in the early part of November he appointed Cardinal Chieregati his representative at the Diet. The legate took with him a letter to the German estates, met in "the quaint old town of Nürnberg." The Pope complained that notwithstanding his condemnation, both by Pope and Emperor, Luther went on teaching and writing, favored not only by the meaner sort but by the nobles as well. Such toleration of error would be bad at any time, it was worse when Christendom was threatened by Turks, against whom the Pope could take no effective action because of dissensions in the Church. Luther ought not to be tolerated any longer; it was a shame for nobles to be led astray by a poor simple friar, as if he alone had understanding and wisdom. The revolt against ecclesiastical authority would be followed

[1] He had a habit of hesitation, of saying *conitamus, videbemus*. On the other hand, he is said to have been hindered in his haste, *Nimia ei nocebat diligentia*.—Ranke, 3: 30.

by a throwing off of secular authority; those who had not spared the goods of the Church would not spare the goods of princes. If it was not possible to subdue Luther and his followers by mild means, severe measures must be tried. The cases of Dathan and Abiram, and of Ananias and Sapphira, were cited. The Germans ought to imitate their ancestors in the council of Constance, who put to death John Hus and Jerome of Prag. The Pope was following the suggestions of those who had advised extreme measures.[1]

It is remarkable how often the council of Constance is mentioned in the documents of this time, and how its doings seemed always to be in men's minds. Hus and Jerome were rather a living presence than shadowy memories. They were at Leipzig when Luther and Eck were disputing; they were at Worms when the Emperor was urged to play false; they were with Adrian at Rome when he wrote his letter; and now they were at the Diet of Nürnberg. The way in which they impressed themselves on the memory and imagination of men reminds one of the "prophecy" at the time of their death, and almost makes us feel that they were endowed with a kind of prescience and saw, as others did not see, what was to come after them. While Hus was in prison, helpless in the power of his enemies, he wrote to the Bohemians: "First they prepared snares, citations and anathemas for a goose; and now they lie in wait for some of you. Although a goose, a tame animal, a domestic fowl, incapable of lofty flight, cannot break their net; yet there are other birds which, by God's word and a godly life, mount on high: these shall break their toils in pieces." In after time the indefinite "birds of lofty flight" were exchanged for "a swan," [2] and the swan was made to represent Luther, and so the prophecy was thought to have been fulfilled. Jerome's words are more definite. In closing his last address to the council he said: "It is certain that you will wickedly and maliciously condemn me, although you have found no fault in me. But after my death I will fix in your consciences trouble and remorse; and I now appeal to the omnipotent God, the high and righteous Judge, and challenge you when a hundred revolving years shall have passed away, to meet me at his bar." [3] Hus was burned July 6, 1415, Jerome May 30, 1416. It is at least interesting to notice how Jerome's appeal was apparently heard. It was but little more than a hundred years when the repeated reference to the council of Constance by Popes and others brought it before the world and compelled men to judge of its acts. The papal party

[1] An excellent summary of this letter is in Sleidan, p. 55; the full text in German, in Walch, 15: 2132 *seq.*

[2] Gieseler, 3: 428. *Hodie anserem usitis, sed ex meis cineribus nascetur cygnus, quem non assare poteritis.* Cf. Robertson, Church History, 7: 377.

[3] Foxe, "Acts and Monuments," 3: 523. Cf. the account of the final hearing of Jerome and his sentence, in Mansi, 27: 889–895.

argued that Hus and Jerome were heretics, because the council had condemned them. On the other hand it was contended that the council of Constance and all other councils are fallible, because this one council condemned innocent men. The council was judged and condemned by the people, and in this case we might well say that the voice of the people was the voice of God.

After Chieregati had presented the Pope's letter to the Diet, he also read his own instructions, in which again there was reference to the council of Constance and John Hus, and generally a repetition of what had been said in the letter. But there was more than this: the Pope had directed him ingenuously to confess that now for some years there had been many abominable things in the Papal See, abuses in spiritual things, transgressions of the commandments, everything changed for the worse. It was not strange, he said, if the sickness had descended from the head to the members, from the Pope to the lower prelates. All of us, he said, bishops and ecclesiastics, have declined everyone to his own way; for a long time there had been none that did good, no not one. "In this matter," added the Pope, "you shall promise, as far as we are concerned, that we will use all diligence that this See, from which perchance the evil has proceeded, shall be reformed, so that, just as the corruption flowed down from it to all below, so also wholeness and the reformation shall come from the same source." He could not promise that all abuses would be corrected at once, for the disease was chronic; not simple but complicated; and it was necessary to proceed slowly, step by step, first dealing with the greater and more pressing evils. If they should seek to go too fast, reforming everything at the same time, they would throw everything into confusion. On his own responsibility the legate called attention to the fact that monks had left their cloisters, and priests had married, to the great disgrace of religion. The sacrilegious marriages, he said, must be annulled; the priests must be punished and the monks reduced to obedience. The Diet was requested to give a written answer.[1]

The papal nuncio failed to make the impression that he wished: the Pope's confession of sins was more easily credited than his promise of amendment. However much he might wish to correct the evils confessed, men knew that he was powerless to do it. Instead of being softened by his candor and good intentions, the Germans were confirmed in their own way of thinking. They recognized how great was the danger threatening from the Turks, and the importance of being united against them; but they were not to blame for the religious differences among themselves, or for not executing the edict and ban against Luther. Their failure to do so had not been without the greatest and most urgent

[1] Summary in Sleidan, pp. 58–60; text in Walch, 15: 2125 *seq.*

reasons. The people had long felt that they had suffered many wrongs from the Roman Court, and now they were made certain of it by Luther's writings; and any attempt to proceed against him would be regarded as making war on the truth of the Gospel and tending to promote the abuses and evils of which they complained. It would result in seditions and civil wars. There must be found, therefore, some other and better way of remedying the evils than the Pope had suggested. There could not be any real and lasting settlement of affairs until the abuses of which the Germans complained were reformed. For years they had paid annates on condition that these should be used in war against the Turks and for the defense of the Christian religion. The annates had not been used for such purposes, and yet their permanent collection was exacted. The estates wished the collection of them to cease. The Pope had asked their advice as to the best way of settling the religious disputes: they thought that he, with the concurrence of the Emperor, should call as soon as possible a free Christian council, to meet in Germany, at Mainz, Cologne, Metz, or some other convenient place. The calling of such a council ought not to be delayed more than a year; and everyone, ecclesiastic or secular, should be permitted to speak freely in it, and without any hindrance to consult for the glory of God, the salvation of souls and the good of the Church. In the meantime they would treat with the Elector of Saxony that Luther and his friends should not write or print any more, and that the preachers throughout Germany should preach the Gospel sincerely, according to the approved doctrine of the Church, do nothing to excite tumults, avoid disputations, and leave all controversies to be settled by the council. The bishops were to appoint learned, prudent men to look after the preachers and see that they preached as they ought to preach; and that nothing new was printed until it had been submitted to the judgment of learned men. As to the married priests, the civil law inflicted no punishment on them; they might be subjected to canonical discipline. If they should be guilty of any wickedness the magistrate ought to correct them. This was the answer of the Estates.[1]

It did not please the legate; he thought that the offences of the Papacy furnished no good reason for tolerating the scandals of the Lutherans. First execute the ban against Luther, and then the Pope would correct what was amiss at Rome. He did not complain that the princes had asked for a general council, but he did not like it that the council was to be held with the consent of the Emperor, or that the Pope was not permitted to choose freely the time and place for holding it. He wished no one to preach whose doctrine the bishop had not approved. The condemned

[1] Sleidan, p. 60; fuller summary in Sarpi, pp. 24–26; text in Walch, 15: 2138 *seq.*

books ought to be burned; and no new books should be printed except under the Pope's regulation. To remit the married priests to the civil law and to punish them only for actual offenses was to interfere with ecclesiastical jurisdiction, "to thrust the sickle into another man's field," as the legate expressed it. The offending priests ought to be handed over to the bishops for punishment.[1]

The nuncio and the Diet could not agree. As the Germans said, he thought only of the profit of the Roman Court, not at all of the necessities of Germany. He expected them to do at once what the Pope required, and wait the Pope's pleasure for relief from their burdens. This they were not willing to do.[2] On the contrary, they stated again and more definitely what they required of the Pope and the German bishops, and informed the nuncio that if relief was not granted them they would take "steps to free themselves form the burdens complained of, and to recover their ancient liberty." They formally stated anew their list of grievances—their *centum gravamina*.[3] The papal court had been enslaving the people, robbing them of their money, and appropriating the rights and duties that belonged to the civil magistrate. They also complained of the bishops. Having concluded their deliberations, they issued a recess embodying the substance of their answer to the Pope.[4] Not long after the Pope's letter, the nuncio's instructions, and the answer of the Diet, including the grievances, were printed; copies were sent to Rome, and others were scattered abroad, that all might know what had been done at Nürnberg.

Not much progress had been made in getting the ban and edict against Luther executed. The recess of the Diet was without force; it invited neglect; it did not really require anything to be done—it was rather an explanation and justification of the failure to do anything. The Diet had confessed that fear of sedition and civil war had deterred the princes from attempting to execute former laws. As the circumstances were unchanged, it was easily understood that the same cause would prevent the enforcement of the new edict. Besides, it was so indefinite in its requirements that each party might understand it to suit itself. Luther wrote to the princes that he had read it with pleasure, but that "through the craft and snares of the devil it had not the authority that it ought to have." Some of the highest quality refused to obey it, and variously construed it. He would give his interpretation of it. Some thought, he said, that to preach according to the approved teachings of the Church was to follow the authority of Aquinas and Scotus and others approved

[1] Sarpi, p. 26.
[2] Walch, 15: 2183 *seq.*
[3] Sleidan, p. 63.
[4] Dated May 8, 1522, text in Walch, 15: 2215 *seq.*

by the Pope. For his part he took it to mean that he was to be guided by Cyprian and Augustine, the older Church Fathers, and the Holy Scriptures. It was required that the bishop should appoint learned men to supervise the preaching of the priests. This could not be done because the "learned men" were wanting, those under the control of the bishops having "learned nothing but sophistry." He did not object particularly to the requirement that books should be licensed before they were printed, but as he understood the law it did not refer to the printing of the Holy Scriptures. As to the married priests, he thought it hard that they should be punished according to the canon law; as that law was contrary to the Scripture it should rather be changed. However, they who would punish the marriage of priests only by canon law were much more moderate than those who required the rack, torment and death for that offense. But yet, as Luther's opponents did not obey the law, he thought that he and his friends ought to have the liberty of violating it.[1] And this seemed to be the general opinion. The Diet virtually confessed that it could do nothing: only a general council was competent to meet the requirements of the case.

The Pope's candor did not help his cause; his opponents thought this one of the cases in which men make a merit of confessing sins that they have no intention to forsake; his friends excused his mistake in consideration of his good intentions and ignorance of the ways of the Papacy. Leo X, they thought, would never have been guilty of such hurtful simplicity—in which they were no more just than to the late Pope. Some mockingly said that it would be well to have the evils corrected step by step—with a hundred years between the steps! How much Adrian was prepared to do in fulfilment of his promise of reformation was not put to the proof. "The court not being worthy of such a Pope, it pleased God to call him almost as soon as he had received the report of the nuncio from Nürnberg." He died September 13, 1523, after having been in Rome less than a year, and again there were sinister rumors of poison. He was succeeded by the nephew of Leo X, Cardinal Julius di Medici, who took the name of Clement VII. In many respects the new Pope was exactly the opposite of Adrian. The ten years of his pontificate were years of development that he was powerless to arrest or direct. Though cautious, skillful, able, tireless, he was dwarfed by the difficulties of his position.

Adrian had made three mistakes: he had too freely confessed the abuses of the Papacy; he had too rashly promised to reform them; and he had imprudently asked the advice of the Germans as to how he should settle matters in Germany. Clement would be guilty of no such indiscretions.

[1] Summary in Sleidan, 63, 64; text in Walch, 15: 2208.

In January, 1524, the Diet reassembled at Nürnberg. Cardinal Campeggio was sent as papal legate; he bore a very loving letter to Frederick, Duke of Saxony—a letter of the same kind that the Popes had been sending the Elector for some years, full of expressions of good will and expostulations. The Pope was glad to hear of the Diet, and that the Elector was to attend it, he had great hopes that something would be done for the welfare of Christendom; he sent his legate, a "man of great virtue," whom he begged Frederick kindly to receive and assist. At the same time he mentioned "the sincere love and affection that he bore toward Germans." [1]

Unfortunately the Elector had left Nürnberg before Campeggio arrived, and the two did not meet. The legate sent him the Pope's letter, together with one of his own, in which he regretted his ill luck in not meeting him. He had heard the report, he said, that the Elector "was a favorer of the new heresies, which report neither he nor the Pope could be persuaded to believe." From the first time he had known him he had observed many noble and excellent virtues in him, and especially that "he was devout in his religion and a most obedient son of the Catholic and Apostolic Church." He wished him to imitate the virtues of his ancestors (the old wish); warned him of the dangers of sedition; those who despised the laws of the Church would after a while contemn the magistrate. Some took delight in seeing the prelates of the Church tossed and despised, not recognizing that they themselves were in danger. The Pope, as the pilot of the ship, sat aloft and foresaw the approaching storm, and sent him, his legate, to forewarn all the princes, and especially the Elector, of the danger that threatened, not so much Rome as Germany, with ruin.

The legate also addressed the Diet. He had, he said, instructions to treat of two things: religion and the Turkish war. As to the first, he was surprised that so many honorable princes should suffer the religion and rites and ceremonies wherein they were bred and their fathers and forefathers had died, to be abolished and trampled under foot, at the whim and persuasion of a few men. The religious innovations, if not checked, could not but produce dreadful troubles. He had been sent to join with them in devising means to remedy the evil. He did not come to prescribe to them, or to demand anything from them, but only to assist with his advice, and apply some salve to the public sore. He then enlarged on the dangers from the Turks.[2]

The politic legate, whose business it was to conciliate, could not avoid addressing the princes in a tone of condescension, so great was the force

[1] Dated December 7, 1523; Walch, 15. 2236; Campeggio's letter, *ib.* 2339.
[2] Summary in Sleidan, pp. 68, 69.

of habit, and so impossible was it for a great dignitary of the Church to realize that the Papacy and the papal officials were already falling from their lofty preëminence—that the times were changing. The Diet heard him respectfully, thanked him for his good will toward Germany, and were glad that the Pope had sent him. So much common courtesy demanded. But the princes were evidently not in the best humor. They supposed, they said, that the Pope and Cardinals, who were acquainted with the state of affairs, had given the legate some instructions, and they wished to hear them. They themselves, the year before, had proposed a plan for settling affairs, had given it to the legate in writing, and he had promised to deliver it to his Holiness. They wished to know what the Pope had to say about it. The legate was conveniently ignorant: "As to whether or not any method for composing the difference in religion had been proposed by them or delivered to the Pope and college of Cardinals, he knew nothing at all of it." He thought those who were in the country and knew its customs were the best qualified to judge how to deal with the present difficulties; but, in his opinion, the first thing to be done was to enforce the decree of the Diet of Worms. He could not tell whether the demands of the Diet had ever been sent to Rome or not. Three copies of them had been brought privately, one of which had fallen into his hands. The Pope and Cardinals could not be persuaded that the princes had written them, but thought rather that some private person had published them, in hatred of the Court at Rome; and he had no instructions with reference to them. But some of the demands reflected on the Pope and favored heresy; these he could not meddle with, but such as were grounded in justice he would consider. And yet, he said, the princes' demands might have been more moderately proposed.

The Diet was not deceived by the legate's profession of ignorance. They saw that it was the policy of the new Pope to treat everything that had occurred at the former meeting as if it had not occurred. A committee was appointed to confer with Campeggio, and he proposed a scheme of reform that was not satisfactory and was not entertained. A message came from the Emperor, complaining that the decree of Worms, which was made with their unanimous advice and consent, had been infringed, to the great prejudice of Germany; and demanding that it should be carefully observed for the future. The princes answered that they would observe it as far as they could, but how far and in what way they intended to observe it may be gathered from the decree of the Diet, April 18th—"That with the Emperor's consent the Pope should, with all convenient speed, call a free council in some convenient place in Germany; that, on November 11th, the States should

assemble again at Speyer, to consult what should be followed until the council should begin; and that the princes, in their several provinces should appoint some pious and learned men to collect out of the books of Luther and others all disputed points, to be presented to the princes in the next Diet, that they might proceed more orderly when they should come to be examined in the council. Furthermore, that the magistrates should take special care that the Gospel was purely and soberly taught, according to the sense and interpretation of expositors approved by the Church; that no infamous libels or pictures should be published; and lastly, that those things wherewith the princes had lately charged the Court of Rome and the clergy should be treated of and discussed in the Diet of Speyer."[1]

The sins of the Papacy were coming home to vex it. As Chieregati had failed in the first, so Campeggio failed in the second Diet at Nürnberg. The Germans were more concerned to have their complaints against the Pope and his Court righted, than they were to enforce the law against Luther and his followers—long accumulated evils had become unbearable. In all propositions from the Pope he had seemed to care only for his own interests. This the Germans resented, and insisted that he should reform abuses before they undertook to settle religious differences. The proposed meeting at Speyer was especially significant; the year before the princes had threatened to take matters into their own hands and now they were proceeding to carry that threat into execution. It was to thwart the plan of the Diet that Campeggio now directed his efforts; he would divide the Germans and array one party against the other. To this end he contrived a meeting at Regensburg of such princes as were favorable to Rome. These were Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother, Archduke of Austria, the two Dukes of Bavaria, the bishops of Trent and Regensburg, the legate himself as Archbishop of Salzburg, and the representatives of nine other bishops. To this convention he proposed the "reformation" that the Diet had declined to accept. It consisted of thirty-seven articles in reference to the dress and conversation of the clergy, administering the sacraments *gratis*, and other ecclesiastical functions, banquets, those that were to take orders, avoiding traffic and public houses, and having concubines; on the number of holy days, fastings, confessing, communicating; on blasphemies, sorcerers, soothsayers, and other things of the same kind. These were, indeed, occasions of scandal and ought to have been amended or regulated, but they were not the things of which the Germans most complained. It was not the lower but the higher clergy that gave offense; the exactions of the Pope, the greed, tyranny, negligence of

[1] Sleidan, p. 73; full text in Walch, 15: 2243 *seq.*

the bishops. In offering to correct things of minor importance, the legate gave assurance that no reformation of principal things was to be expected from him. Hence it was that the Diet was not satisfied with what was proposed. The convention at Regensburg was more compliant; it accepted the legate's scheme, and decided that, as the Diet had determined to execute the decree of Worms as far as possible, it should be executed in the domains of those present. The Scripture should be taught according to the interpretation of the Church; no one should preach without a license from a bishop; no alterations should be made in the sacraments or rites of worship; no one was to receive the communion without confession and absolution; all monks and nuns who had forsaken their orders, and all married clergy were to be severely punished; nothing was to be printed without the authority of the magistrate; Luther's books were not to be published or sold; young men from their dominions who were at Wittenberg should return home or go somewhere else, under penalty of being incapable of any Church living or of teaching youth; those who had been proscribed or banished should not be permitted to remain in their territories.[1]

The convention had met at Regensburg July 6, 1524. It was the first step toward the division of Germany into two definite, organized ecclesiastical parties. The action of the Catholic princes was out of line with that of the Diet, and it was not taken in good part that some of the princes should presume to legislate for all, especially as the regular national assembly had so recently spoken. But this conflict among the States themselves was of less importance, because the Emperor, who was then in Spain, disallowed the action of the Diet. He complained that it had condemned only some of Luther's books, while he had condemned them all; that it had decreed a general council in Germany and requested the legate to treat with the Pope concerning it, instead of applying to him, whose business it was to care for such things. He resented the calling of a national convention at Speyer, and forbade it to assemble. As the council was necessary, it should be held, but at such time and place as he should designate. In the meantime the Edict of Worms must be obeyed, and there must be no discussion of religious matters until the council was called by the Pope's orders and his. The Emperor spoke in a somewhat loftier tone than the princes were accustomed to, and they were not altogether pleased.[2]

There was one thing as to which the Emperor and the Diet were agreed: the necessity of a general council. In this again we have an

[1] The account of the meeting is in Walch, 15: 2263; the agreement reached *ib.*, 2296 *seq.*; the statutes of reformation proposed to the Catholic estates by Campeggio are given in Mansi, 32: 1079–1091 in thirty-five articles.

[2] Dated Bourgos July 15, 1524; text in Walch, 15: 2268 *seq.*

intimation of the close relations of the beginning of the sixteenth century to the fifteenth. In the earlier time there were evils to be corrected, the Papacy was corrupt, there must be "a reformation of head and members." Nearly the same state of things existed now. A general council was then the solace and refuge of those who were grieved and oppressed by the state of the Church, and it would be so again. But now as then the Pope was afraid of a general council. Clement VII was wont to say that a council is always good when anything is to be treated of but the Pope's authority; but that being called in question, nothing was more dangerous. As in former times the Pope's strength consisted in having recourse to councils, so now the security of popedom consists in declining and avoiding them. This opinion was in perfect consistency with the claims of the Papacy; holding that the Pope is above councils, and, in a sense, above the Scripture, there was no need of a council—there was nothing for a council to do. Leo X had already condemned Luther and his doctrines, and to ask that his case be referred to a council was derogatory to the authority of the Apostolic See. But besides this, Clement VII probably had reasons of his own for resisting the demands of the Germans. Jealousy of the Emperor's power may have influenced him; it may be that he feared inquisition would be made into his own history and conduct. He was of illegitimate birth; there was some doubt concerning the means by which he had risen to power; his administration had not been perfectly clean. Still, as these things are not needed to account for Clement's policy, we need not insist on them. We ought, however, to note that the persistent and general demand for a council shows how little practical hold the doctrine of papal infallibility had on public sentiment in the Empire.

It has been the object of this chapter to show the conditions, general and special, that prevented the active prosecution of Luther after his excommunication by the Pope and his condemnation at Wŏrms. Next to the favor of the Elector of Saxony he owed his safety to the fact that he had a great party with him—his teaching had appealed to the hearts and judgments of the people. Thousands of them did not regard it as a new heresy, but as the old orthodoxy. Then, Germany had long-existing and deeply-galling grievances against the Papacy. With so much in favor of Luther, and so much against the Pope, the rulers would not attempt to execute the ban at the risk of civil war. They did not prosecute Luther because they were afraid. In process of time political and ecclesiastical grievances might be forgotten or become of little influence in comparison with newly stimulated devotion to the old faith, and then the conflict would come. The meeting at Regensburg gave intimation of the rising of that devotion—of the coming of a time

when loyalty to the Pope would override all other considerations. In fact, the division among the princes might have produced immediate results disastrous to Luther and to Germany, if there had not arisen new dangers which for a time thrust into the background all less vital concerns.

CHAPTER III

EXEUNT HUMANISTS

With the prophets out of the way, and Carlstadt out of the way, much had been done to prepare for a simple, undivided development of things at Wittenberg, and from Wittenberg. The new movement was separating itself from every hindering alliance, not only in the narrower, but also in the wider field. In every time of the quickening of human thought and of the upspringing of new systems, many forces start together that do not belong together. In the beginning they may be serviceable to each other in overcoming a common resistance, but some will cease to work, others will be deflected, until at last only those that have a common end will move on a common line. The period immediately after the Diet of Worms was the time when Luther's work was to get itself discriminated from everything that did not belong to it, and definitely to assume its own character. We have already seen the first steps in this discriminating process; in no long time that process advanced still further. In the beginning, and for several years, Luther had no more serviceable helpers than the Humanists. He and they, in the early stages of his work, were hindered by the same cause: the domination of Aristotle and the scholastic theologians. He and they were in close sympathy as asserters of the claims of reason against a narrow and narrowing authority. But though they had a common hindrance, they had by no means a common end, and as soon as Luther began to develop clearly his purposes and ends he and his quondam allies began to separate.

Of one group among the Humanists, Hutten was the representative and type. He had won national fame before Luther. He was crowned by Maximilian at Augsburg, July 12, 1517, as the greatest poet of Germany—a title that he had fairly won. Until Luther's theses appeared he was pure Humanist, and in the earlier stages of the resulting controversy, like Leo X, he saw nothing more than a vulgar squabble of monks. But his experience in Italy had made him patriot as well as Humanist, and he quickly saw the possibilities of the Lutheran movement as a means of promoting German liberty. Liberty meant to him first of all the Empire's independence of Rome—it meant the destruction, at least the strict limitation, of the Pope's temporal power. As the breach between Luther and the Pope widened, Hutten perceived more clearly

the availability of Lutheranism as a political weapon to be used for the advancement of his political ideals. Though he had a good deal to say about "the Gospel" in the almost delirious letters that he wrote at the time of the Diet of Worms, it is plain that political freedom, not religious is the cause lying nearest his heart. Of the Gospel in itself, and for its own sake, there is little reason to suppose that he ever had any real appreciation.

Hutten was himself a moral and physical decadent. Moreover, he belonged to a decadent class. His interest in the Reformation seems to have been wholly selfish and calculating—he favored it in the interests of a political theory and of his own class. He hoped by an alliance with the reformers, against the Church on the one hand and the princes on the other, to rescue his order from impending doom and to build up a centralized government in Germany as the bulwark of her liberties. He could see better what it were well to do, than what it was possible to accomplish. The drift of things had set too strongly away from both the ends that he sought, and in the direction of princely oligarchy, for a much stronger man than he to overcome.

In this enterprise he became associated with a man whose far greater strength for a time held out some hope of success. Franz von Sickingen, Knight of Ebernburg, in the district of Mainz, was born in the same year with Luther, the elder of the two by a few months. By 1521 he had gained national fame as a warrior of prowess, and the sworn foe of the territorial princes of Germany. Holding directly of the Emperor, like all others of his order, he had some show of right in claiming to be the equal of the princes in rank and authority, while his possessions and military strength perhaps entitled him to equality with some of the lesser princes, whose territories included but a few square miles. One of the first to comprehend the revolution in warfare that was going on, he had gradually assembled a force of ten thousand mercenaries, who were regularly paid, well disciplined, armed with the newest weapons and drilled in the new tactics. He was an ally whom Maximilian and Charles V were glad to have on their side, and he was therefore treated with tender consideration where a weaker man would have been forcibly suppressed. He had long been the terror of the law-abiding and peace-loving element of the Empire. A private war against the city of Worms, in 1516, had brought upon him a decree of banishment, but he snapped his fingers at the law and continued his career without molestation. He was probably attracted to Luther by Hutten, who had become his ally, giving his pen to the cause of the knights in return for protection and bread. At Hutten's prompting he pledged the reformer assistance and offered him harborage in his castle, in case

Saxony should become too warm for him.[1] Luther was undoubtedly grateful for such an offer, at a time when he had not too many powerful friends, but he was too wise to compromise himself and his cause by a closer connection with one whose real devotion to the Gospel he had good reason to distrust. Sickingen was as little a reformer, in truth, as he was Humanist—he was either, or neither, as suited his purposes—a man of too little learning for the one and too little piety for the other.

Sickingen and Hutten bore a double hatred to the great ecclesiastics of the Empire, wishing their destruction alike as territorial princes and as priests. They regarded secularization and partitioning of church property as the most vital part of religious and political reform. This was the view ultimately taken by all the princes who followed the lead of Luther, but in 1522 it was a novelty. To some extent the movement of the knights to enforce this principle had the sympathy of Luther and the free cities, but it was too revolutionary a scheme to warrant them in any open demonstrations. In August, 1522, Sickingen summoned a meeting of knights, and a "Fraternal League" was organized. Their avowed programme was a mixture of economic, social and religious reform: they demanded the restoration of the ancient liberties of the Empire, with the Emperor at the head, the nobles at his side, all of equal rank, which of course involved the abolition of the territorial authority of the princes; the abolition of mercantile monopolies; the abrogation of foreign laws and foreign administrators and judges; the diminishing of monks and ecclesiastics; the enactment of laws against foreign manners; the abolition of indulgences and other taxes by which Germany was drained of money to enrich Rome. The free cities were invited to join the league, and it was confidently expected that the subjects of some of the princes would seize this occasion to rise against them and throw off the yoke. Had Sickingen gained a great initial success, there is no telling to what the movement might have grown, for it undoubtedly appealed to a vast underlying sentiment of dissatisfaction in Germany.[2]

But the uprising of the knights was a failure from the first. Sickingen issued a declaration of war against the Archbishop of Trier, and in September appeared in force before the walls of the city, which he expected to take by surprise and easily overcome. Immediately ordered by the imperial council to retire, he replied that he was as much the servant of the Emperor as the council; that he intended to establish

[1] Hutton wrote Jan. 20, 1520, and Sickingen himself repeated his assurances of support Nov. 3d. Letters in Walch, 15: 1635–1637.

[2] Strauss, *Ulrich von Hutten*, 2: 195 *seq.* See also Hutten's *Beklagung der Freistätte teutscher Nation*, a good specimen of his German semidoggerel verse, *Opera*, 5: 383 *seq.*; and his *Ermahnung an eine gemeine Stadt Worms*, 5: 395. The latter is very pious in form, full of texts of Scripture, and proves that he was trying to give to the enterprise of Sickingen the character of a holy war.

a new and better system of law as ruler of Trier; and that he would have the Emperor's approval in his course. Possibly, had the attack proved successful, after he had established himself at Trier Charles might have accepted him as *de facto* ruler; but he had risked his cause on a single throw of the dice, and fortune was against him. The Archbishop, like many medieval prelates, proved himself a better secular warrior than spiritual; he had penetrated Sickingen's design and prepared himself for the attack. Instead of finding an easy prey in an unprepared town, the leader of the knights found it swarming with armed defenders, who repelled all his assaults, and he had made no preparations for a regular siege with artillery. This check was as fatal to the plans of Sickingen as it was unexpected; in his rashness he had not provided for defeat, and his retirement from Trier was the signal for all knights to desert the movement but those who had already compromised themselves too deeply. The expected insurrections in the domains of the princes did not occur; none of the free cities joined the league. On the contrary, the ban of the Empire was now laid on Sickingen once more, and he was thus declared a public enemy. He then did the one thing necessary to insure his complete downfall, by making an inroad into the Palatinate, burning and plundering as he went. It thus became evident to the princes that they could have no lasting peace but by combining against him as the common foe and pursuing him to his destruction. Accordingly, the Archbishop of Trier, the Landgrave of Hesse and the Count Palatine formed an alliance pledged to quell this revolt of the knights and make an end of their lawless leader. On April 29, 1523, they laid siege to his castle of Landstuhl, to which he had retired, battered down the walls with artillery, and, their leader mortally wounded, the knights surrendered May 6th. Hutten escaped and made his way to Switzerland, where he died not long after in poverty, misery and friendlessness. In his last days he managed to alienate the one friend he had left, Erasmus, and only the charity of strangers gave him refuge and support at the end.

The suppression of this revolt was the signal for general measures of reprisal and repression against the knights, and marks the first stage of the great social and political changes that the Reformation powerfully promoted. Each prince eagerly seized on the excuse and opportunity to subdue the neighboring knights, with whom he had long been at feud, and the result was the total ruin and practical suppression of the order. Only those escaped who made their submission to the princes and were content thenceforth to take the position, not of equals, but of subject freeholders. The first attempt to use the Reformation as a means of social reorganization not only proved a complete failure,

but issued in the distinct strengthening of the hands of the territorial princes. The system of oligarchy that had replaced the figment of imperial power in Germany, became notably solidified as the result of this vain struggle of the knights to recover their ancient position.

With a fortunate prudence, Luther had kept aloof from this movement, and his reform was in no way compromised by the failure. It was not altogether prudence that dictated this aloofness, but conviction. He saw early in their acquaintance that these knightly supporters of the Reformation had no deep interest in the only thing that really interested him, the religious side of the movement he had begun. Besides, he was constitutionally opposed to violent methods of advancing the interests of religion. He did not believe that the Gospel could be propagated by the sword. While Hutten was writing his vehement letters at the time of the Diet of Worms, Luther writes to Spalatin: "You see what Hutten wants. I would not have the Gospel defended by violence and murder. In this sense I wrote him. By the word the world was conquered, by the word the Church was preserved, by the word she will be restored." [1]

Thus the Reformation was freed from the first group of Humanists, who went out from the reformers because they were not of them—because patriotism, as they understood the matter, was more to them than religion. But there was another group, of whom Erasmus was the head and type, who also went out, but for a different reason—to them culture was more than religion. The controversy between Luther and Erasmus, therefore, must be looked on as something more than a personal quarrel, though the personal element entered into it. It was something other than the battle of two champions, one upholding the Protestant faith, the other the Catholic. It was the conflict and the final parting of two opposing tendencies that had for some time been manifesting themselves and crystallizing into parties. The time comes in an age of conflict over fundamental principles when each man must decide for himself what principle he will hold to be of paramount importance, and having made the choice he ranges himself accordingly. Erasmus and those for whom he spoke were Humanists to the core, and only incidentally, one might almost say accidentally, reformers. Accordingly, they found it easiest, not to say unavoidable, to cast in their lot with the old Church, the patron and promoter from the first of the new learning. Luther and those whom he represented were first of all advocates of the gospel of salvation by faith, which they considered the most valuable fruit of the new learning, and they were only partially Humanists. Accordingly, they could no longer abide

[1] Letter of Jan. 16, 1521. De Wette, 1: 543.

in a Church that flouted the Gospel and stigmatized as heretics those who preached it. Both leaders were at heart conservatives, and had not circumstances brought Luther into personal antagonism to the Papacy and made him a rebel of necessity, not of choice, he would never have left the old Church. Erasmus, being under no such compulsion, took the road that Luther himself would have taken had liberty of choice been allowed him.

It is the custom to speak of Erasmus as timid, vacillating, double-tongued, lacking the martyr's spirit,[1] time-serving, vain, loving and seeking the praise of men—nearly all of which is true, though perhaps it should not be said without some qualification, certainly not without taking some account of noble qualities in his nature. His conduct toward Luther gives no sufficient grounds for criticism, except on the assumption that he was at heart a believer in all Luther's doctrines and an approver of all Luther's methods. It is no great proof of cowardice that a man is not willing to die for a doctrine that he does not believe; or of inconsistency for him to break with a party to which he never really belonged. Nor yet was it a great or a singular offense that Erasmus did not submit himself to Luther's leading; he had so long been a leader himself.[2]

Already, as occasion has offered, the services of Erasmus to Luther have been indicated. It will not be amiss to notice more in detail the relations of these two remarkable men to each other. And it so happens that we have ample means of knowing what Luther thought of Erasmus, and what Erasmus thought of Luther. At first it is evident that Erasmus was disposed to extend to Luther that favor and patronage which he extended to so many bright, studious men of his time. Others had been flattered, pleased, stimulated, guided by his encouragement and advice, and he thought to help Luther, too. He had reached that elevation from which it was natural for him to regard others as pupils to be instructed, rather than as equals with whom to hold conference.

But this was an impossible relation between him and Luther, as he would have seen if he had had discernment enough to recognize in the reformer a spirit, if not a mind, superior to his own. He did not read Luther's books (so he often said) not because he was afraid to read them, but because he did not think it worth while, except, indeed, to know what to think of Luther. In a long letter written to Cardinal Cam-

[1] A passage from a letter to Cardinal Campeggio is quoted against him: "Let others seek for martyrdom, I do not think myself worthy of that honor." But a few years later he modified this sentiment into the following: "I would gladly be a martyr for Christ, if he would give me strength, but I am not willing to be a martyr for Luther."

[2] We may well recall that Reuchlin, the great Hebraist, refused to follow Luther, and Staupitz would not (or could not) go all the way with him.

peggio, dated December 6, 1520, after Luther's excommunication was everywhere known, and just four days before Luther burned the bull, he says: "Of all Luther's books I have not read twelve pages; and then only by paragraphs here and there; and yet from these, rather dipped into than read, I seemed to myself to recognize rare gifts of nature and a genius admirably adapted to expound literature according to the ancient method." The impression made by his own slight examination of them was strengthened by the opinion that others had formed of Luther's writings. "I have heard," he said, still writing to Campeggio, "that distinguished men, men of approved doctrine and life, have congratulated themselves that they have fallen in with his books." Here then was just such a fine genius as Erasmus loved to patronize. He would rejoice to number him among his friends and admirers. He would treat him as he treated Zwingli, Jonas, Melanchthon and others.

But besides the personal interest that drew Erasmus to Luther, there was a general interest arising from the attitude of the two parties, Lutheran and anti-Lutheran, toward literature. "It happened," said Erasmus, "by what chance I know not, that in the beginning those who opposed Luther were the enemies of good learning, and on that account the friends of learning were less hostile to him, because they were afraid that they might strengthen their own adversaries by taking the part of his." In fact he thought that in the first instance opposition to Luther was merely opposition to learning. He quotes with approbation what was said by John Faber: "We ought to consider the fount and source of this uproar: it is manifestly the hatred of learning, which, with malicious cunning, they are endeavoring to mix with Luther's business." [1]

In this matter, too, "the cold and timid scholar" was influenced by a fine sense of justice and fair play. "To this extent," he said, "I favored Luther, that I was unwilling that he should be given up to the will of certain men, who on any and every pretext strove to subvert good learning; and yet I did not so favor him as not to wish him to be overcome by the testimony of Scripture—to be refuted by arguments, if he deserved to be refuted. Noble natures desire to be taught, they do not endure to be put down by force. It is the part of theologians to teach, of tyrants to coerce. I so favored Luther as to wish that he be corrected and not destroyed, reclaimed and not blotted out, if in anything he erred. And all who have ever written have erred, save only the sacred Scriptures! In this way I think that to-day all upright men favor Luther, yea, even the Pope himself. Cyprian loved the books and genius of Tertullian, although he did not agree with him in all his teachings. Jerome loved the genius of Origen although he did not favor

[1] Erasmus, *Op.* 3: 594–901.

his condemned opinions.[1] I do not wish these examples to be taken to Luther's injury. I pronounce no judgment on him either way; he has his judges. Just as my praise would not help him, so I do not wish him to be injured by it if in anything I differ from him. . . . No one admonished him in a brotherly way; no one tried to hold him back; no one taught him; no one sought to refute him. They only shouted that a new heretic had arisen, who taught that it was not necessary to confess all mortal sins! . . . A terrific bull was sent forth against him in the name of the Roman Pontiff. Copies of it were burned; there was a tumult of the people; the thing could not have been more odious. The bull was too severe in the judgment of all. It was made more severe by the additions of those who were to execute it." So Erasmus wrote to Campeggio in December, 1520. Even after the Diet of Worms his sympathies were still with Luther. "The report here is," he wrote to Jonas, "that you stood by Martin Luther at Worms. No doubt you did so, just as I should have done had I been there, that this tragedy might be so settled by moderate counsels that it would not afterwards break out again with greater injury to the world. And I wonder that this was not done, since the best men greatly desired that the tranquillity of the Church should be the matter of chief concern."[2]

Erasmus was far more bitter against the opponents of Luther than he ever became against Luther himself. His quarrel with them was of long standing: he hated them before Luther became known, and continued to hate them to the end. Their ignorance, narrowness, and intolerance aroused in him a contemptuous scorn. He did not spare them, as they did not spare him. With them, he was the favorer of heresy; with him, they were the enemies of "good letters," which they had not learned in youth and afterwards had not time to learn. They misunderstood him, perverted his language, misrepresented him, talked against him.[3] It happened with them as it has too often happened with men of their kind: regarding themselves as the peculiar defenders of Christianity, they supposed that whoever was against them was against the truth, in defense of which they were not always careful to tell the truth, and were deaf to the commonest dictates of charity and justice. To his

[1] In asking for Tertullian's works Cyprian was in the habit of saying, *Da mihi magistrum*, give me my teacher. Jerome says of Origen: "The city of Rome herself compelled the senate to go against this man, not on account of the novelty of his doctrine, not on account of his heresy, as the mad dogs (*rabidi canes*) now pretend, but because they could not endure the glory of his eloquence and learning, and because when he was speaking all others seemed to be dumb." Mosheim, *Ch. Hist.*, 1: 187.

[2] Letter to Justus Jonas, May 10, 1521. *Op.* 3: 639–643.

[3] In a letter to Campeggio he says, "They do not fear from the sacred desk to attack the fame of those by whose industry polite studies have been advanced, among whom they place Erasmus."

sympathy with outraged learning Erasmus added a deep sense of personal injury. But his interest was not with literature alone; he was keenly, sorrowfully, indignantly alive to the religious degradation of his times. After mentioning the corruptions of other ages he adds: "But I do not know that the leaders of the Church ever so eagerly and so openly yearned after the goods of this world, which Christ taught us to despise, as they do now. Scriptural studies have sunk very low; it is no better with morals; sacred literature is enslaved to human cupidity; the credulity of the people is turned to the gain of the few. Pious souls, to whom nothing is more precious than the glory of Christ, are groaning. This brought it about that at the beginning Luther had everywhere such favor as I think had not happened to anyone for ages. As we easily believe what we greatly wish, men thought there had arisen a man who, pure from the desires of this world, could bring some remedy to so great evils. Nor indeed should I have despaired of such a result if, at the very first taste of the little books that began to come out in Luther's name, I had not feared that the affair would end in tumult and open division of the world."

He condemned both the aims and the methods of the extreme papal party. He had nothing in common with them. He approved Luther's aims, he condemned his methods. It was not his business, he said, to give an opinion as to the truth of what Luther taught; but certainly the latter's manner and spirit in carrying on the controversy he did not at all approve. Therefore, he said, I admonished Luther himself and also those of his friends whose authority I thought would be of weight with him. What advice they gave him I know not; but the affair was so managed that there was danger that the evil would be doubled and intensified by remedies wrongly tried. Since the truth is itself bitter to most persons; since it is in itself seditious to overturn things established by long use, it is wiser to soften the natural difficulty of it by civility of treatment than to pile up hatred on hatred. Luther had violated all maxims of prudence. He had not imitated the gentleness of Christ and his apostles with their opponents; which gentleness of teaching, which prudence in dispensing the divine word, took the world; and what no arms, no sublety of philosophy, no elegance of rhetoric, no strength or art of man could do, forced it under the yoke of Christ.

Erasmus was not willing to acknowledge, as some claimed, that the disease of the age was too great to be cured by gentle remedies. God in dealing with men sometimes uses severity; but this does not give men any excuse for doing the same thing. Many men, he said, would be less evil if they were robbed of their riches, but it is not the part of a good man to rob them in order to make them better. Luther gratui-

tously magnified the differences between him and others, when it was the part of wisdom and prudence to make them seem as slight as possible. It was no excuse, as some said, that he was provoked by his adversaries; he ought to have restrained himself. Some excuse him for not submitting himself to the judgment of Leo X, a very merciful Pope, or to that of the Emperor, an excellent and compassionate prince, after he had been driven by an impulse from without to write too bitterly. But why did he rather listen to those who thus advised than to other friends, men of learning and experience, who advised the opposite? Already many of his special favorers were striving to help him with ridiculous books and idle threats, as if trifles of that kind either terrify adversaries or please good men, according to whose judgment everything that is to have a good end must at last be decided. Their rashness had brought in an army of evils; it had put a burden of odium on good men, who in the beginning had not been unfavorable to Luther, because they hoped he would treat the matter differently or because his enemies were the same.

Erasmus complains of the use that had been made of his letters. They were private and sent under seal, but notwithstanding they were immediately published. Things that he wrote long ago were brought out and perverted, and he was made to appear a friend of tumult and disorder. To speak candidly, he said, if I had foreseen that such a time would come, I either would not have written what I wrote or I should have written differently. Nothing is more hateful to me than conspiracy, schism, faction. This whole business, whatever it is, was begun against my remonstrance and certainly with my constant condemnation of the manner of it. It is very far from my wish to be mixed up with so dangerous a faction, and I wish that they would be prudent who think that with such acts as they are using they can allure anyone to their camp. If they wished to drive off anyone who is favorable, what better means could they employ? In such a way he wrote to Jonas, whom he commended for favoring Luther at Worms.

As matters progressed, the fears of Erasmus increased; his disapprobation of Lutheran methods became more decided. He poured out his heart to Melanchthon. He said, I do not know what kind of a Church that of yours is; but there are men in it who, I fear, will turn everything upside down and compel the princes to restrain both the good and evil by force. With their mouths they are always saying "the gospel," "the word of God," "faith," "charity," "Christ," "the Spirit." Their conduct says something very different. Have we driven out our Lords and Popes and bishops, to bring in harder tyrants? Who could persuade himself that they were actuated by the Spirit of Christ, whose

conduct so differs from the doctrine of Christ? "Once the Gospel made ferocious men gentle, rapacious men considerate, turbulent men peaceful, abusive men gentle-speaking; these men are made ferocious, they seize the goods of others by fraud, they excite tumults, they speak evil of the most deserving. I see new hypocrites, new tyrants, not even a shred of the spirit of the Gospel. If I were the most ardent follower of Luther, I would hate them worse than I do hate them for the Gospel's sake, which their evil conduct brings into reproach; and for learning's sake, which they utterly destroy."[1] Melanchthon in his reply virtually confesses the justice of what Erasmus says, but he would separate the cause itself from the conduct of its advocates. "I beseech you, Erasmus," he says, "in the first place not to believe that Luther acts with those whose morals you justly blame; and in the second place, not to be less favorable to the doctrine because of the folly and rashness of certain men."

There can be no doubt that Erasmus reckoned himself among those who at first were favorable to Luther. He rendered Luther's cause great and valuable service. He has told what it was that alienated him. Upon occasion he himself knew how to wield a bitter pen, but that was in his own defense, in opposition to those who had wronged him or learning. In Luther's matters he was a spectator, a judge, not a partisan. Suppose Luther had followed his advice; had used his gentler methods? Was Erasmus right? Was Luther wrong? We may answer both these questions affirmatively, but at the same time it is probable that on Erasmus' plan the Reformation never would have gone forward; on Luther's it succeeded. It is greatly better that men should be kind and just and fair-minded and without passion in advocating truth; this is the ideal way of correcting wrongs and establishing right. But, as a rule, in order to the successful working of this plan, it must be tried in an ideal community. The other plan, involving injustice, hardship, prejudice, hatred, all evil human passions, is the usual plan of successful revolutions; it is the plan that adjusts itself to ordinary human conditions. But although it is successful, the wrong of all kinds that it permits or requires does not go unavenged—the suffering of the reformed community is itself a kind of expiation of the sin of the reforming methods. And by such methods, for the most part, men only clear the way for the working of other and better methods. They reach only partial results; they leave wounds that gentleness and time must heal; they cause dislocations that only patience and wisdom can right; they occasion sorrows for which there is no solace in this world. The body politic, like the natural body, is healed only by suffering. When the impetuous

[1] Letter dated Basel, Sept. 6, 1524. *Op.* 3: 817–820. Melanchthon's reply is given in cols. 820, 821; also in CR, 1: 674, where it is dated September 30th (probably correct) while the editor of Erasmus has made the date October 30th.

Luther has gone before, the work is not complete until the thoughtful and more cautious Erasmus has followed after. Alas for the earth if the sunshine did not follow the storm!

The two men were very different in spirit and methods, but there was so much of Luther's work with which Erasmus sympathized that it was only in time and with difficulty that he could break entirely with him. He had befriended Luther with danger to himself. He taught some things tentatively and with reserve; Luther taught the same things positively and without reservation. In many quarters all the odium that attached to Luther was carried over to him. He was made responsible for doctrines that he did not hold, or that he held only with qualifications. His situation was not pleasant. All the while he sought to maintain friendly relations with both parties. He wrote to Pope Adrian VI congratulating him on his elevation to the Papacy, and offering to make suggestions how the difficulties in Germany might be removed, with the understanding that what he should say should be known only to himself and the Pope. Adrian replied to his letter, urging him to write against Luther and asking for the promised advice.

The correspondence with the Pope is interesting and honorable to Erasmus. Adrian said: "We do not omit to exhort you to use against these new heresies that most felicitous pen which is yours by the favor of God. For many reasons you ought to think that this duty has been especially reserved for you. You have great force of genius, varied learning, and readiness in writing, such as belong to few, not to say more. Besides, you have great authority and favor in those nations in which the evil arose. You ought to use these gifts in defense of the faith, and of the honor of God, by whose kindness alone they have been bestowed on you." Nothing, he thought, could be more grateful to God, or more worthy of Erasmus's genius, than such a service. Erasmus in reply wished that he had the ability that the Pope attributed to him. He would not hesitate to heal the public evils even by the sacrifice of his life. But his authority would avail nothing with those who had despised the authority of the university of Paris. Besides, he had lost credit. There had been a time when men praised him, calling him a great hero, the Prince of Letters, the Star of Germany, etc. They use different language to him now. Then, the thing to be done was very difficult. He would not dare to tell the Pope in how many places, and how deeply the favor of Luther, and at the same time hatred of the Pope, had been fixed in the public mind. Among those who favored Luther were favorers of learning; he wished it was not so, but so it was. He had had the sweetest fellowship with all learned men; he would rather die than lose their friendship, and at the same time bring hatred on himself. And yet

he would do this rather than seem factious. He had in many ways shown that he was not a favorer of Luther, and had dissuaded men from favoring him; but while he was discouraging heresy in Germany he was slandered at Rome, called a heretic, an arch-heretic, a schismatic, a liar. What, he says, can be more unhappy than my condition, striving day and night for the good of both parties and hated and wounded by both! He had his views as to what should be done. Many wished to try the virtue of severity; the result would prove that such counsel was bad. I see, he said, more danger than I could wish that the affair will end in bloody slaughter. I do not inquire what punishment may be due to heretics, but what makes for the public peace. The evil is too deep-seated, has spread too far, to be healed by cutting and burning. The example of Wiclif and others whose party was suppressed by harsh measures was not pertinent to this case; the circumstances were different. The Pope wishes to heal rather than destroy—if all were like him something might be done. First the causes of the evil must be ascertained and removed. Then forgiveness must be granted to those who by the influence and persuasion of others have been led into error. Then the world must have hope that the burdens of which the people complained would be taken off. He thought, too, that novelties of little importance, yet creating disturbance, ought to be forbidden by the rulers and that some restriction should be placed on printing.

This was the plan of Erasmus; there is nothing new in it. He wrote to Melanchthon that the Pope did not take his advice in good part. It is of greater value to us than it was to the Pope; it confirms our knowledge from other sources and proves how general and how severe was the revolt, how real the difficulties of the situation were, and how consistently Erasmus opposed those who counselled violence against Luther.[1]

We have seen how Erasmus wrote to representative men on either side. In his letters to Jonas and Melanchthon he mentions freely the things that displeased him in Luther and his followers; in the letters to Campeggio, a prominent agent on the papal side, he does not spare the Pope; and if he is careful, in writing to the Pope, to disclaim all connection with Luther, he is yet free to say that the blame is not all on Luther's side. There is little or nothing in the later letters that may not be found in the earlier. It is true, however, that as time passed on these fears increased and his hopes waned. At first, things that he had in common with Luther were more than those in which they differed;

[1] The correspondence was as follows: Erasmus to Adrian, congratulation, dated Aug. 1, 1522. *Op.* 3: 721; Adrian's reply, Dec. 1, 1522 (735); Erasmus, brief letter, Dec. 22 (737); Adrian urges Erasmus to write, Jan. 23, 1523 (744); Erasmus replies at length, in the letter from which the above quotations and summary are taken—a letter undated and incomplete (745–748).

at last the proportion was changed, and the antagonisms were in the ascendant. And this is not strange—things were constantly moving; the Lutheran party was all the while becoming more radical and revolutionary. It every day became more apparent that there was to be a schism in the Church, and Erasmus must go with the new party or remain with the old. He had reached that time of life when men hesitate to make changes in their party connections. He had himself long been a leader, accustomed to have men defer to his opinion and judgment, and should he go with the Lutherans he must take second place and become a follower of Luther. From the first Luther had stood aloof from him, unwilling to be patronized by him, and thought that Erasmus was playing the part of protector.[1] With subtle intuition he at once understood that he and Erasmus might be friends and allies, never disciple and teacher. As time went on he despaired of an alliance, and only asked that they might not be enemies; he besought Erasmus not to write against him, and he would not write against Erasmus;[2] but in the very letter in which he made this request he could not refrain from speaking to the great scholar in a lofty tone of compassion. No one, he said, could deny the beneficial influence of learning, or the influence of Erasmus in promoting the intelligent study of the Bible; God had bestowed on him a magnificent and peculiar gift for which thanks should be given. But, he continued, I have never desired that you should go out of your sphere and mix yourself up with my business. Although your genius and eloquence might be of great service to my cause, yet, since you have no heart for it, it would be safer for you to follow your own bent. He did not wish his friends to worry Erasmus, but permit him to spend his old age in peace; and that, he said, "in my opinion they would certainly do, if only they should take into account your weakness, and consider the greatness of the cause, which has long since gone beyond your little measure (*modulum tuum*)." God, he thought, had not given Erasmus the gift of fortitude. Erasmus replied that he was acting more in the interest of the Gospel than many of those who were boasting that they were its peculiar champions. "I see," he said, "that many abandoned and seditious men have arisen; I see that discipline and good learning are going to destruction. I see that friendships

[1] In reference to Erasmus's letter to the Archbishop of Mainz in 1529, Luther wrote to John Lange: *Egregie me tutatur, ita tamen ut nihil munus quam me tutari videatur, sicut solet pro dexteritate sua.* Jan. 16, 1520.

[2] "In the meantime, this I ask of you, that, if you can do no other service, you will at least be only a spectator of our tragedy; that you will not join your forces to our adversaries; especially that you will not publish books against me, just as I will not publish against you." Luther's letter is given in Erasmus *Op.* 3: 846, merely dated 1524; De Wette dates in April, 2: 498. Erasmus replied under date of April 11, 1525, an entire year later, *Op.* 3: 926. Meanwhile, his book had been published, September, 1524.

are sundered, and I fear that bloody tumults will arise."[1] "If," he said, "you are prepared to give to every man a reason for the hope that is in you, why should you take it ill if anyone for the sake of learning should dispute with you? Perchance Erasmus writing against you would do more for the Gospel than certain fools who write for you."

When the relations between them had become so strained, it was impossible that the two men should not after a time become mutually hostile. Both sides had sought the help of Erasmus, and one had an apparently good claim to his aid, since he claimed its protection and patronage. His position in the Roman Church was becoming untenable, unless he made it manifest that he had quite broken with Luther. Even his scholarship was questioned by his enemies—as he writes to his friend Archbishop Warham, people in Rome were beginning to call him Errasmus. They accused him of being the real author of the Reformation: "Erasmus laid the egg; Luther hatched it." He admitted that there was some justice in the charge, but, said he, "I laid a cock's egg; Luther has hatched a pullet of a very different breed."[2] At length he yielded to solicitation and wrote against Luther his *Diatribe de Libero Arbitrio*, which was published in September, 1524.[3]

Erasmus was a great scholar and man of letters, but he was not a great theologian and he had neither native gifts nor acquired skill in metaphysical discussion. He did not therefore produce a book of much value on this subject; only in its elegant latinity was it worthy of the fame of such a scholar. But it required no profound theological learning or philosophical acumen to detect the most vulnerable point in the writings of Luther prior to this time. That was undoubtedly his extreme Augustinianism, especially the crude statements that he had repeatedly made about the human will, in which he went far beyond Augustine, if not in actual teaching, certainly in boldness and extravagance. It was the old question, the question that Eck and Carlstadt had discussed at Leipzig, and which has so often been discussed before and since, and which always will be discussed, because it has to do with an insoluble problem which men will nevertheless forever strive to solve. "Whatever is done by us, is done, not by free will but by pure necessity." "The free will is merely passive in every act of its own that is called willing; for the will is carried along and borne forward by grace." "It is in no

[1] Erasmus's mentioning the sundering of friendships will remind the reader of the celebrated case of Burke and Fox, who, after having been friends for more than twenty years, were divided by differences of opinion about the French Revolution. Burke's pathetic remark that "he was sacrificing his oldest friendship at an age when friendships could not be replaced," may apply to Erasmus. See Lecky's "England in XVIII Century," 5: 504–506.

[2] *Ego peperi ovum, Lutherus exclusit. . . . Ego posui ovem gallinaceum, Lutherus exclusit pullum longe dissimillimum. Op.*, 3: 840.

[3] *Op.*, 9: 1215–1247.

one's hand, whether he will think of evil or of good; but all things are from God, against whom we are able to do nothing except in so far as he permits, or himself does the deed." These are fair specimens of Luther's reckless assertions, the last of which explicitly makes God the author of men's evil thoughts and deeds.

Erasmus had little difficulty in pointing out Luther's error and in showing that such a doctrine of the will is incompatible with reason, experience and the general tenor of Scripture, as well as with many specific passages. He was much less successful in his attempt to expound a better doctrine, but he set forth very fairly the moderate anti-Augustinian or semi-Pelagian view that prevailed among Catholic theologians of his day. He was perhaps happiest in pointing out the practical difficulties of the Lutheran theory: If the will of man is not free to choose the good, who will try to live a good life? What is the meaning of God's law, if men cannot obey? How can God punish or reward those who cannot choose between good and evil, but merely do what they must? His decision between the two opposing principles was a hesitating compromise: "In the same individual act, two causes work together, the grace of God and the will of man, grace being the principal cause and the will the secondary cause which of itself can do nothing." "I prefer," he concludes, "the opinion of those who attribute something to free will, but a great deal to grace." This is a doctrine not greatly differing, if at all, from the synergism that Melanchthon developed in his later days, after he was freed from the overmastering influence of Luther.

Erasmus writes throughout in a tone of studied moderation, of urbanity even, with no trace of personal bitterness. Indeed, one may read between the lines that the task was an ungrateful one, undertaken only because the author felt that he could no longer with safety to himself refuse to write something against Luther and his teaching, but was accomplishing the task in a perfunctory and half-hearted fashion. But there was nothing perfunctory or half-hearted or urbane about Luther's reply. He seems, to do him justice, to have tried hard to restrain himself and to keep his language within bounds of decency, and it is also his due to add that he succeeded remarkably—for him. But though this is by far the most decent of all his controversial writings, his *De Servo Arbitrio* cannot be commended to controversialists for their imitation.[1] He cannot deny himself the pleasure of an occasional mean fling, and a bitter epithet bursts forth from him now and then, as if it were unawares, while a tone of ill-suppressed rage is heard through the whole.[2]

[1] LOL, 7: 113 *seq.*; Walch, 18: 1669 *seq.*

[2] This is a fair specimen: "Who knows, most worthy Erasmus, but God may condescend to visit you, through me, his miserable and frail vessel, that in a

Luther seizes skillfully on the fundamental weakness of Erasmus, who said at the outset of his *Diatribe* that he was so far from delighting in assertions that he would rather at once go over to the sentiments of the skeptics, if the inviolable authority of the Holy Scriptures and the decrees of the Church would permit—to which authorities he willingly submitted himself in all things, whether he followed what they prescribe or not.[1] Nothing could have been more characteristic of Erasmus, or less characteristic of Luther, than such a saying. Erasmus was essentially a skeptic and free thinker, but without the courage of his doubts. He expresses in his writings doubts concerning the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, transubstantiation, the sacramental character of penance and marriage, the invocation of saints and the Virgin, the authenticity of the second epistle of Peter and the Apocalypse, the genuineness of miracles, including those of the Scriptures. In fact, it is much easier to make a list of the things that he doubted than of those that he believed. There are only two things in which we may be quite certain that his belief was absolute, Erasmus and sound learning. With such skepticism Luther had nothing in common—he believed many things, and he believed all with an energy that amounted to certitude. He correctly interpreted Erasmus to mean: it matters not what is believed by anyone, anywhere, if the peace of the world be undisturbed. Luther proceeds to make a strong point in accusing Erasmus of vacillation in his doctrine of free will, in one breath asserting and denying it. Not without justice, he charges that his distinguished adversary is "resolved to hold with neither side . . . in order that . . . you may have it in your power to assert all that you deny and deny all that you now assert." This is precisely what Erasmus had been doing for years, and the thrust must have gone home. He points out inconsistences in his opponent, as Erasmus had pointed them out in his own teaching—"You also enjoin us works only. But you forbid us to examine, weigh and know, first our ability, what we can do and what we cannot do, as being curious, superfluous and irreligious." Erasmus had defined free will as "the power in the human will, by which a man may apply himself to those things that lead to eternal salvation or turn away from the same." But Luther flatly denies: "The will cannot change itself, nor give itself another bent; but rather the more it is resisted, the more it is irritated to crave. . . . But when God works in us, the will being changed

happy hour I may come to you with this book of mine, and gain my dearest brother." This is like the threat of some pious people to pray for their adversaries—than which there is no lower depth of hypocritical malice.

[1] *Et adeo non delector assertionibus, ut facile in scepticorum sententiam pedibus discessurus sim, ubicunque per diviniarum Scripturarum inviobilem auctoritatem et Ecclesiae decreta liceat, quibus meum sensum ubique libens submitto, sive assequor quod praescribit, sive non assequor.*—*Op.*, 9: 1215 D.

and sweetly breathed on by the Spirit of God, desires and acts, not from compulsion, but responsively, from pure willingness, inclination and accord." "The will, having lost its freedom, is compulsively bound to the service of sin, and cannot will anything good."[1]

Luther grounds this doctrine of the will in the nature of God. "The omnipotence of God makes it, that the wicked cannot evade the motion and action of God, but, being of necessity subject to it, he yields. . . . God cannot suspend his omnipotence on account of his aversion, nor can the wicked man change his aversion. Wherefore it is that he must of necessity continue to sin and err, until he be amended by the Spirit of God."[2] To the objection that this contradicts our ideas of goodness and justice, Luther declares that whatever God wills is right, purely because he wills it: "God is that being, for whose will no cause or reason is to be assigned, as a rule or standard by which it acts; seeing that, nothing is superior or equal to it, but it is itself the rule of all things. For if it acted by any rule or standard, or from any cause or reason, it would no longer be the will of God. Wherefore, what God wills is not therefore right; but on the contrary, what takes place is therefore right because he so wills. A cause and reason are assigned for the will of the creature, but not for the will of the Creator, unless you set up, over him, another Creator."[3] Luther thus treats us to the ultimate absurdity of his system, a God who is wholly irrational, and acts without any reason, or else he could not be God!

Erasmus had made a point of the lamentation of Jesus over Jerusalem, and the words "How often would I have gathered you . . . but ye would not." Luther disposes of the matter by making a distinction between the secret and the revealed will of God, which practically means that God says one thing while he means another. He wishes not the death of a sinner, in his revealed word, but in his inscrutable will he has determined the sinner's death. As man, Christ, who had come to redeem the world, shed tears over Jerusalem, but this does not exclude his purposely leaving the city to perdition, as God.[4]

Erasmus replied in a book as long and labored as the *Diatribe* is brief and simple, which he named *Hyperaspistes*.[5] He complained, not without reason, that Luther had never before written against anyone more rabidly, and what is worse, more maliciously. "How," said he, "can such scurrilous abuse, such criminal falsehoods benefit your cause, that you should call me an atheist, an epicurean, a skeptic, a blasphemer, and what not?"

[1] *De Servo Arbitrio*, Sec. 41–50. The references to this treatise are conformed to the English version of Cole, London, 1823.
[2] *Ib.*, Sec. 84. [3] *Ib.*, Sec. 88. [4] *Ib.*, Sec. 64, 66.
[5] The *Hyperaspistes* is as long and labored as the *Diatribe* is brief and simple. *Op.*, X: 1250–1536. The former fills 286 columns of the folio edition of Erasmus, while the latter occupies but 32 columns.

The *Diatribe* of Erasmus and Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio* are little read in this generation, even by those who have dipped into the literature of the Reformation and know something at first hand of the writings of Luther and Erasmus. To us they are chiefly important as marking the separation between Luther and the greatest of the scholars and men of letters of the Renaissance—or rather, for there was more in this than the personal element, the separation between Humanism and the Reformation. For this separation we must conclude that Luther was as much responsible as Erasmus, but in the nature of the case it was inevitable. In any circumstances it was unreasonable to expect Erasmus to become a follower of Luther, and Luther would tolerate none but followers. He thought Erasmus had done his work and had no further use for him—he was a hindrance, a makeweight, and he must be thrust aside. At most, he might be only a looker on. And Luther was right. He had come to a place where he must assume responsibility and become the leader of a revolution, and those who were not with him were against him.

The likenesses of the two men were accidental and superficial, the differences profound and vital. To Luther religion appeared the chief concern of man, to Erasmus learning. Erasmus desired from youth to become a cultivated man, Luther aspired to be made a new creation in Christ. The goal at which Erasmus aimed for society was its advance in civilization and enlightenment, Luther desired its moral renovation. For himself Erasmus would have attained his ultimate object whenever he should be perfected in the gifts and graces of this world; Luther would remain unsatisfied until he should be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. There was a difference like a world's diameter between the two men and their ideals, and the wonder is that this fact could have been so long concealed from their contemporaries—that they could ever have been reckoned as belonging to the same party.

But though Erasmus finally became a hindrance to the Reformation, Luther should have recognized the immense service that Erasmus had rendered, nor should we lose sight of it. There is something touching in his words to Luther: "What you owe to me, and how you have requited it I do not now inquire. That is a private matter. It is the public calamity that distresses me: the remediless confusion of all things, which we owe to you more than to anyone else." More than anyone else Erasmus himself had broken the power of authority, and had made it safe to think and write; he had helped to create the conditions in which the Lutheran movement was possible, and he had many times defended Luther when the latter needed a defender. It was not his fault if Humanism, revolting against scholastic theology and overthrowing it, was attempting to take the place of the dethroned tyrant. In this it

was but following the natural order. However, after men begin by an appeal to reason they invariably drift into the assertion of authority and submission to it; and men have done this not less when they have been battling for free thought against bigotry and superstition. Among the narrowest, most intolerant, most scornful of all parties, has often been the party of science, of literature, of culture! Even Erasmus might be a bigot in the interest of "good learning" and Humanism come to stand in the way of spiritual freedom.

Nor can we of this generation find it easy to forgive Erasmus his lack of perception. Lucidity was his special gift, and he should have seen clearly that Luther's cause and his own must stand or fall together. Both were struggling in the interests of freedom, against despotism. Erasmus should have seen that if Rome could succeed in crushing Luther, it would be the turn of the Humanists next. It was a case in which the lovers of liberty, as Franklin said, must all hang together or they would all hang separately.

Humanism was thrust aside, and another and greater force came forward to take its place. The age had been making learning an end, and men awöke to find there is something in this life more important than the Greek and Latin classics, or the elevation of mind and refinement of taste that come from studying them. The Great High Priest of Culture might minister a little longer at decaying altars, but his cult was waning, and it would be years before he would have a successor. It happened with Erasmus as it has happened often in times of revolution: the great interest to which he had given his mind and heart, noble as it was, worthy as we must regard it, ceased to be the chief interest of the world. He was in the midst of contending parties, himself of no party. The sweetest friendships of his life had been blasted. Growing old, lonely, he saw the darkness gathering about him. For some years he found quiet and work at Basel, but revolution came there too, and he sought another home at Freiburg. Returning at last, intending to stay but a short time at Basel, he sickened there and died, having completed his seventieth year (1536). Of those whose profession was letters he was perhaps the greatest that ever lived. He was a Humanist, a lover of justice and fair play, a hater of noise and confusion and loud talking, a man of genial humor, of adamantine industry; flattered by cardinals, princes, kings and Popes, he was yet the friend, companion and adviser of young scholars. Having offended both Protestants and Catholics by his course, he has had few defenders, and we are in some danger of forgetting how great space he filled in the early days of the Reformation and how important an influence he exerted for a time on the course of events. With his death Humanism ceased to be a distinct, conscious historic force.

CHAPTER IV

REFORM OR REVOLUTION?

ALL Germany was awakening; a new national consciousness was coming to the birth. The "monk's quarrel" had grown into an open revolt against the head of the Roman hierarchy. It was daily becoming more clear that great religious, political and social changes were imminent, but in the universal ferment it was by no means yet apparent what sort of changes would result. The course that the new movement would finally take was not yet seen by its leaders, nor had they thus far developed any definite plan. Perhaps nobody understood the situation less clearly than Luther himself, the author of all this confusion and unrest. But he had been slowly feeling his way toward a settled and reasoned policy, and events were to precipitate his choice of allies and crystallize into permanent convictions ideas that were already in solution in his mind.

Everything thus far in the Lutheran movement pointed to revolution. There had naturally gathered under Luther's banner all the discontented elements of society. Much in his earlier teaching had encouraged revolt against the existing order, and if other and more conservative elements in his writings had thus far been overlooked by some of his followers, this was only natural under the circumstances. That he should be regarded by nearly all, by friends as well as foes, as not merely the central figure of a time of social unrest, but the willing leader of a revolution that could issue in nothing but a general reconstruction of social institutions, was nothing more than might have been reasonably expected.[1] But the time was at hand for a clearer declaration of his principles and purposes—to make it plain to the world that, while circumstances might make him a rebel for a time, nothing could make him a revolutionary.

We have already seen that, of all the classes in sixteenth-century Germany, the peasants were in most desperate case. The recent sharp advance in prices, and the consequent increase in their rents and the growing exactions of their lords, had made their condition intolerable. They felt most keenly of all the economic crisis through which the nation was passing, the pressure of which was the real, though ill-apprehended, cause of the revolt against Rome. It was more than natural,

[1] It is instructive to note that the great religious movement called the Reformation at once called into existence a multitude of socialistic groups; it is also instructive to note how those in authority dealt with these groups.

it was inevitable, that the new movement should be hailed by them as the harbinger of better days. Luther's strenuous advocacy of liberty for Christian men might by him be understood solely of liberty in things spiritual, but the peasant can hardly be blamed for understanding the brave words of his leader in a less sublimated sense. Luther's insistence on the Scriptures as the sole authority in religion, followed by putting those Scriptures in their native speech into the hands of all his countrymen, had resulted in a stricter and more consistent application of his principle to all mooted questions than he himself gave it or approved in others. He might content himself with the ideal of a Church reformed in doctrine and worship, but to the peasant the Gospel had come to mean a reorganization of society in accord with the teachings of Jesus. The discontent of the peasantry was increased, not diminished, by the progress of the revolt against Rome, which they found, in spite of the fine words of the leaders, was bringing them no redress of grievances, and no longer promised them relief from intolerable burdens. Accordingly, they determined to strike a blow for themselves. Living in a chronic state of rebellious feeling, that had often broken forth with less provocation into violence, they now rose in the most serious of all their attempts to gain by force what had been refused them as a matter of justice.

The first outbreak occurred in August, 1524, in Swabia, on the lands of the Count of Lupfen, in the Black Forest. The countess had compelled some of her tenants to gather strawberries on a church holiday, and also to collect snail shells for winding her skeins after spinning. Among the customs to which the peasants strenuously objected was this of *corvée*, or enforced labor in addition to that required of them by law or ancient usage. The limits of this right of *corvée* were ill-defined, and so every exercise of it gave rise to dispute whether it was a lawful demand or a tyrannous imposition. In this case the exaction seems to have been trivial, yet uncommonly vexatious, as trivial things often are. The tenants refused the service and this spark was sufficient to fire the train and produce the explosion. From estate to estate the revolt spread, and in a few days a force of twelve hundred peasants had gathered under the leadership of one Hans Müller, a roving soldier of fortune, and appeared before the town of Waldshut on the Rhine. The citizens fraternized with the insurgents and gave them provisions and encouragement. By the middle of October Müller is said to have had fully five thousand under his nominal command. As winter approached, his forces dwindled away; and in addition the princes and nobles pretended a disposition to grant the demands of the peasants, in order to throw them off their guard and gain time for the gathering of a force to subdue them. Forcible suppression of the revolt was the more difficult, as the struggle between

the Emperor and Francis I, now fast approaching, had drawn off from Germany most of the available mercenaries, who were promised better pay and active service in Italy, where the struggle was evidently to be waged. The first armed demonstration of the peasants therefore came to nothing.

During the winter the people silently brooded over their wrongs, or talked of them at weddings, at funerals and on other occasions of meeting. Early in the year 1525, their grievances took shape and found expression in the famous Twelve Articles. These articles were sent to Luther and he made them the occasion of a public address, first to the nobles, then to the peasants, and finally to both together.[1] The fact that he was consulted, and that he thought it to be his duty to undertake the office of monitor indicates as clearly as possible the preëminence of his position. He was the one man whom all classes would hear, and who had a right to speak to all classes. He was the recognized leader of reform, and it was his prerogative to point out the direction that the new movement should take. There was danger that it would turn aside from its proper course, and arraying class against class, end in tumult and confusion. He must, if possible, prevent the peasants from resorting to violence; or failing in this, he must free himself and his cause from all responsibility for their acts. It was a difficult task and he performed it with characteristic boldness.

He reminded the nobles of his former address to them, and of his advice, by which they had not profited. For the present disturbed condition of things they had no one on earth to thank but themselves, especially the blind bishops and foolish pastors and monks. Things had come to such a pass that the people could not and should not endure them any longer. If the rising peasants did not right them, others must do it. The nobles might slay, but God would make alive. "It is not the peasants, dear Lords, but God who arrays himself against you." Some of the peasants' demands were so reasonable that it was a shame they were compelled to make them. It was the duty of the magistrates to care for the people, but they had failed to do it; instead they had imposed no end of exactions. If crops were poor, the taxes were nevertheless to be paid; if crops were good, the taxes and rents were increased; and the money wrung from the poor was wasted by the rich in luxury and profusion. In a word, the peasants were in a condition of hopeless wretchedness; their most reasonable demands denied, and most unreasonable burdens imposed.

To the peasants Luther said that the princes who refuse to admit

[1] *Ermahnung zum Frieden, auf zwölf Artikel der Bauerschaft*, Wittenberg, May, 1522. LDS, 24: 257 *seq.* Walch 15: 58 *seq.* A nearly complete version in English, not always accurate, may be found in Michelet, pp. 161–180.

the preaching of the Gospel and oppress the people justly deserve to be dethroned, but it was not the business of the peasants to dethrone them. The people must obey the magistrates. The magistrates are God-appointed. Sedition is rebellion against God; they that take the sword perish by the sword. No one must presume to be judge in his own cause; no one must undertake to redress his own grievances. When men undertake to avenge themselves, all law is at an end; and, casting off all restraint, they are worse than the heathen, worse than the Turks. It does not alter their case that their cause is the cause of God. Peter was not permitted to use the sword in defense of his Master, a case in which, if ever, it was right to resort to violence. The people must be patient; the Gospel itself was the remedy for their ills. If they proceed to violence, God will disappoint their designs. He himself would pray against them; and, he said, "though I be a sinner, yet the cause of my prayer is just and I make no doubt it will be heard; for God will have his name to be sanctified." Some of the peasants' claims Luther would not consider—they did not belong to his office, which was to instruct men in religious and spiritual affairs. They claimed a right to choose a minister; there was nothing wrong in that, but as the magistrates furnished the funds by which the pastor was supported, it was not lawful for the people to give them to whom they would. The people were first to ask the magistrate to appoint a pastor; if he refused, they might themselves choose one and support him with their own means. If the magistrate should interfere, the people's pastor might flee; and whosoever chose might flee with him. Luther utterly rejected the peasants' claim for exemption from tithes and for release from bondage. "What," he said, "did not Abraham and many other holy men possess bondmen?" The demand for personal freedom savored of rapine and violence, and was repugnant to the Gospel.

The address was as simple, candid and undiplomatic as possible. Luther said just what was in his heart. What he said was not pleasing to either party and was not fitted to allay the passions of the peasants. To tell an armed multitude that, for the most part, their demands were reasonable, their burdens unbearable, and that God was fighting against their oppressors, was not exactly the way to induce them to lay down their arms. They would hardly take it patiently to be advised to submit to wrong, to go into exile, and to wait for the coming of Christ to right all things. Naturally they would listen to Luther when he said the things that pleased them, and despise his counsel when he spoke of patient endurance. But, as matter of fact, his address had little or nothing to do with the course of events. It was written April 16th, at Eisleben, and that very day the outbreak began.

It has sometimes been thought, because the Twelve Articles are in the

main reasonable, that the peasants were somehow justifiable in what they did. The substantial justice of their cause has blinded men to their conduct. History is full of examples of the heartless cruelty of men who seem to themselves to be seeking freedom, justice, and even religion, in a tumultuous uprising. The peasants took arms, as they said, by the command of God, and "out of love to the public, that the doctrine of the Gospel might prosper, justice and honesty of life might flourish, and that they might for the future secure them and theirs from violence and oppression." But these advocates of freedom forced men to join them under penalty of death; these asserters of truth were bound by no pledge; these friends of honesty became robbers and plunderers; these who wished security for them and theirs were deaf to cries for mercy from others. Wherever they went the country was desolated as if by fire. The sad thing about the matter was, that with all the injury inflicted on others, they got no good to themselves. They were opposed by the army of the Swabian league under General Truchsess, and wherever they were met by regular troops there happened rather a slaughter than a battle. As is usual in such cases, violence provoked violence, and the cruelty of the authorities far surpassed that which they avenged. In this uprising, lasting only two or three months, it is supposed that fifty thousand peasants perished.

Thus far only the revolt in southern Germany has been described; there was a similar uprising in the North, under the general leadership of Thomas Münzer. This man, so famous among the fanatics of that time, was born at Stollburg, probably in 1490, and was educated, as some say, at Wittenberg, or according to others at Leipzig. He studied in an irregular way, was a mystic in theology, and an enthusiast by nature. After moving from place to place, he settled in Zwickau in 1520, already ripe for reform or revolution. He was not a prophet himself, but he was a friend of the prophets. After staying a short time at Zwickau, he was expelled from the city together with the prophets, who went to Wittenberg, as has already been related; while Münzer went to Prag, where he had no great success. In 1523 he was at Alstedt, where he married a nun. He was afterwards at Nürnberg, and at Basel, and finally at Mülhausen, where he was first preacher and in a little time magistrate and ruler as well. In the beginning of his public life he had the friendship of Luther, but that did not last long; he felt himself called to be the leader of a new movement. The Pope imposed too heavy burdens on men; Luther was too lax in his requirements, especially he did not sufficiently emphasize the things of the Spirit. Münzer anticipated some of the English Puritans: he would have men look grave, speak little, wear long beards, meditate much on God, pray often and fervently,

expect some recognizable sign of God's favor, and look for revelations in dreams. He would level all distinctions among men: all were to be equals and brothers, and have all things in common. All who agreed with him were his friends and God's friends; those who opposed him were God's enemies, marked for destruction. His communism was of that intoxicating kind that takes away from men their common sense, robs them of all sympathy with their race, and in the name of brotherhood makes them the enemies of human society. He was not without foresight. In anticipation of war he cast "some great guns in the monastery of the Grey Friars," but he neglected to provide ammunition for them. He had a certain prudence, too, and patience to wait for the time to strike. This patience, however, availed little, as Pfeifer, one of his lieutenants, precipitated matters by beginning the attack on nobles, castles and monasteries. His success encouraged others to begin and Münzer could no longer delay.

In beginning his work he issued a proclamation. "Dear brethren," he said, "how long will you sleep! Arise, fight the battle of the Lord. Now is the time. All Germany, France and Italy are moved. Heed not the sorrow of the godless. Show them no pity. Rouse up the villages and towns, and especially the miners in the mountains. On, on, on, while the fire is hot. Let your sword reek with slaughter. So long as your oppressors live you cannot be free from the fear of man. So long as they reign over you, it is of no use to talk of God. On, on, on, while the day is yet yours, God is for you; follow him. The battle is not yours, but the Lord's. Quit you like men. You shall see the divine interposition. Amen. Given at Mülhausen in 1525." He signs himself, "Thomas Münzer, servant of God against the ungodly."[1]

It was in April that Pfeifer made his first attack. The 15th of the following May, Münzer and his followers were posted on a hill near Frankenhausen, protected by a rude fortification of wagons and carts. Before them were the Elector of Saxony, Duke George of Saxony, Philip of Hesse and other princes and their retainers. The poor people, badly armed, without organization, already half repenting of their folly and rashness, were losing courage in the presence of their enemies. The princes, willing to spare them, sent messengers to them, advising them to deliver up their arms and their leaders and go to their homes. While they hesitated, Münzer came forward with an encouraging address, the effect of which was increased by the opportune appearance of a rainbow in the heavens, which he and his army interpreted as a divine intimation of victory. On the side of the nobles, Philip of Hesse took the lead, and after a short address, made the assault. The peasants

[1] Michelet, p. 181.

were scattered, and five thousand of them slaughtered. Münzer was taken in the town of Frankenhausen, and after cruel tortures was beheaded. It is reported of him that in his last hours he recanted his errors, received the last sacraments of the Church and died exhorting the people to hold fast to the true Catholic faith. The incredible levity that marked his whole life makes the tale not difficult to believe. It is further recorded that as he was led forth to die, Duke George, a steadfast Romanist, said to him, "You should be sorry, Thomas, that you left your order, laid aside your cowl and took a wife." Philip of Hesse, a steadfast Lutheran, said, "Let not that trouble you, Münzer, but let this be your sorrow, that you have excited the people to rebellion. Trust God, he is gracious and merciful. He has given his Son to die for you."[1]

There is no occasion to make a hero of Münzer. The quick and calamitous ending of his undertaking is sufficient proof of its madness. The address that he is reported to have made to his desponding followers shows at the same time his skill as an orator and his fanaticism as a leader. His closing words might well have moved the multitude, accustomed to feel that they were living in the intimate presence of God: "Be not now moved at the suggestions of your own reason," he said, "neither be troubled at a certain shadow and appearance of danger that stands in your way; but fight valiantly against your wicked and accursed enemies and be not afraid of their great guns, for in my coat will I catch all the bullets that they may shoot against you. See you not how gracious God is to us! Behold a manifest sign and token of his good will to us. Lift up your eyes and see that rainbow in the clouds. For seeing we have the same painted on our banner, God plainly declares by that representation which he shows us from on high, that he will stand by us in the battle, and that he will utterly destroy our enemies. Fall on them courageously and with certain hope of divine aid, for God will have us to have no peace with the wicked." [2]

With the dispersion of the rabble at Frankenhausen and the death of Münzer, the insurrection ended. It had accomplished nothing good; what good it aimed at was obscured by the violent methods of seeking it. No one can blame the peasants for being discontented; their condition was intolerable. Nor is their rising difficult to account for. Many new forces had been introduced into the life of the times, and these had produced changes and dislocations. Relations that had been natural and beneficial were such no longer. Under feudal institutions vassal

[1] See the very hostile and prejudiced account of Münzer's life, published soon after his death and attributed to Melanchthon, Walch, 16: 159 *seq.* Luther wrote a bitter tract, called *Eine Schreckliche Gericht Gottes über Thomas Müntzer*, LDS, 65: 12. Also see Strobel, *Leben, Schriften und Lehren Thoma Müntzers*, Nürnberg, 1795.

[2] Strobel, pp. 110–112.

and lord had been mutually helpful: there was loyalty and devotion on the one side, and care and protection on the other. But with the change in the mode of warfare lately introduced, there had come a change in everything else. The forty days' service that the vassal rendered his lord in return for the privileges of the land gave place to hired service. With paid soldiers at his command, the lord was independent of his vassals. His interests and theirs were no longer common. There was a constant tendency for the strong to encroach on the rights of the weak, and as constant a tendency among the weak to a feeling of jealousy and estrangement toward the strong. The life, the sweetness, the glory of the old system had passed away and its dead body remained an offense and a burden. In the old times the peasant had borne the burdens for the sake of the blessings; the blessings were gone, while the burdens remained and were increased. It was such a situation as may be brought about in any time of rapid and radical social changes.

As the different classes were separated from each other in interests and sympathies, antagonisms might easily arise. Several things conspired to arouse them. The increase of wealth and luxury and knowledge; the quickening of all the pulses of life; opportunities coming as they had not come before aroused new aspirations and ambitions in the bosoms of men. They became conscious that they had rights, that they might rise, and that their inherited condition was a hindrance to them. At this time Luther came preaching that the Pope was a tyrant, imposing unjust, useless, even injurious, laws upon the people; that the bishops were doing the same thing; and that the rulers, in addition to the wrongs that they themselves inflicted were protecting and upholding the Pope and the bishops. Those among the poorer classes who believed Luther came to feel that the rulers were their enemies and God's enemies. That they had this feeling is proved by their conduct, by their publications and the testimony of all. That Luther's teaching helped to produce and intensify it is equally clear.[1] Besides this, there were active fomenters of trouble. Sleidan, a contemporary historian and witness, says, "This great and terrible war was, in a great measure, occasioned by busy and pragmatical preachers." Against these preachers Luther speaks with the emphasis of indignation. He says, "Satan has raised up many seditious and bloody preachers." "Take heed, therefore, again and again, what sort of men your preachers are, for I am afraid that bloody-minded men have crept in among you who by their sermons inflame you." "The devil, who had not hitherto

[1] Duke George of Saxony wrote to Philip of Hesse, his son-in-law, that no one could help seeing that the preaching of Lutherans would produce just such effects as had been produced. Philip replied, saying that there were no Lutherans among those whom he had punished. Gieseler, 4: 123.

been able to oppress me by means of the Pope of Rome, now goes about to undo me by those bloodthirsty preachers." "Above all things, beware of those teachers that spur you forward. I know what sort of men they are; they lead you to a precipice, that they may get honors and riches by your dangers." He tells the nobles that, on account of their sins, God permits the devil by means of those prophets to stir up the people against them.[1] In the face of all these things, we must conclude that Luther's rebellion against the Papacy had something to do with the uprising of the peasants.

Luther was deeply outraged by this violent outbreak of the peasants. For one thing, they had not listened to his advice, and to his mind such conduct in any man or any body of men was an unpardonable sin. Already he had begun, as his treatment of Carlstadt and Erasmus has shown us, to identify his own opinions with his cause, and his cause with the counsel of the Almighty, so that those who withstood him seemed to him to be enemies of God and of all good. Then he probably also foresaw what actually came to pass, that his enemies would try to fasten on him and his teachings responsibility for the peasants' revolt; and he feared that those in authority, who had been his protectors and had promoted the spread of his teachings, might take a similar view and turn against him. In a burst of rage and selfish fear he sat down to compose a pamphlet against the "robbing and murdering bands of peasants" in which he raved against them with frenzied violence.[2] By their rebellion these people had put themselves beyond the pale of sympathy or toleration. They were to be treated just as a mad dog is treated, slain without hesitation or pity, because they had no pity. Everyone who could slay was called on to slay; those who slew would be doing God service, and those who fell in fight with the peasants would be martyrs. As he saw it, the conduct of the peasants was not only wicked in itself, but it imperiled all that he had wrought for, dared for, hoped for. It did measureless harm; it would destroy measureless good.

The passionate violence and bitterness of this pamphlet constitutes to this day an ineradicable blot on the name and fame of Luther, for which his admirers attempt various lame apologies, but no defense. His conduct is the more condemnable when we recollect that he was

[1] The sentences quoted in this paragraph are taken from Sleidan's account of Luther's address on the Twelve Articles, pp. 92–94. The preachers against whom Luther speaks so positively were, it may be, already more or less in opposition to him. He, no doubt, had Münzer in mind. But even the most fanatical of the preachers were, as a rule, first Lutherans and then fanatics. They are the legitimate creation of the first, chaotic, fermentatious, period of the Reformation.

[2] *Wider die mörderischen und räuberischen Rotten der Bauern.* LDS, 24: 287 *seq.* For the full text, see Appendix V.

the son of a peasant, that his sympathies should naturally have been with the class from which he had risen, and that in thus taking without reservation the side of the princes and becoming more violent in word than they were in deed, he was acting the renegade. But no stones should be cast at him to-day by those men who have come up from the lower ranks, and obtained professional standing or business eminence, and now for hire take the side of corporate wealth and special interests, against the rights and welfare of the plain people from whom they sprang. Even Luther's friends were shocked by his pamphlet and remonstrated with him, whereupon he justified himself in what we should call an "open letter," [1] in which he repeated his offense, and even intensified his guilt, for he now said in cold blood and after due reflection what might have been excused had he pleaded that he had first written in the heat of passion. Indeed, from this time on, the chief difference in tone that we can detect between the Papal and the Lutheran documents is, that the Pope claimed to be infallible, while Luther would never admit that he was in the wrong.

From that day to this, also, writers on the Reformation, with substantial unanimity, have seen the peasant revolt through the spectacles provided by Luther. They have dwelt at length on the brutality and violence of the peasants, and magnified the outrages committed by them against the class that had so oppressed them, but have maintained a prudent silence concerning the violence and brutality of the nobles,[2] and have discreetly omitted mention of their outrages on the peasants both then and for generations previously. They have tacitly approved Luther's ethical principle: that for a noble to kill a peasant was rendering service to God, but for a peasant to kill a noble was a crime without forgiveness in this world or in the world to come. And even now that the facts are better apprehended, the most that can be said by a candid historian does not amount to a justification of the peasants. In the light of all that occurred during this struggle, one is compelled to admit that, in a brutal age, they often behaved themselves almost as badly as their lords.

[1] *Eine Sendbrief von dem harten Büchlein wider die Bauern.* July, 1525, addressed to Caspar Müller, chancellor at Mansfeld. LDS, 24: 295 *seq.* Walch, 16: 77 *seq.* Luther showed his tender sympathy with the peasants by such contemptuous words as these: "What is ever more uncivil than the mad plebeian or the common man when he is stuffed and drunk and obtains power?" "The severity and rigor of the sword are as necessary for the people as eating and drinking, yea, as life itself." "The ass will have blows and the mob will be controlled with force—that God knew well. Therefore he gave the ruler, not a fox's tail, but a sword in his hand."

[2] Contemporaries estimated that 100,000 peasants were slaughtered. Though such wild guesses have no scientific value, as mere statistics, they have this value: they are a good index of the judgment of eye-witnesses that a merciless revenge was taken on the rebels.

Looking back from this distance on the uprising, we are better able than were its contemporaries to understand its significance, to estimate its chances of success and to speak impartially of its measure of justification. That the ideals and demands of the peasants were substantially just is conceded by practically every modern writer on the period, and is tacitly confessed by subsequent legislation in Germany, which has virtually conceded every one of these demands and more. It was perhaps too much to expect the immediate concession of all that was demanded in the Twelve Articles, but on the other hand there is no evidence that the peasants would not have been satisfied with less—so far satisfied, at least, as to refrain from open rebellion and bide their time for the gaining of the rest. If ever a people or a class had a genuine grievance that warranted forcible resistance to legalized oppression, these peasants could make out a clear case. Except on the theory of passive resistance to every wrong, as the duty of all men, and especially of Christians, their rebellion could not and cannot be condemned. And accordingly, as we shall presently see, it was on that ground that Luther condemned them.

But, in modern thinking, the moral right of rebellion and revolution is conditioned not only on the justice of a cause, but also on a reasonable prospect of success. Men who incite their fellows to a rebellion that has not the slightest hope of victory are virtually guilty of murder. Had the peasants this practical justification, as well as the justification of intolerable wrong? No doubt it seemed to them that they had a fair chance of winning, but we can see more clearly, and it is apparent to us that they had from the first nothing to expect but defeat. Their weakness was that they lacked intelligent leadership. If they had had this, they would not have lost their one favorable opportunity, to make common cause against the princes with the knights. There was a single moment at which a peasant uprising might have proved successful, and that was when Sickingen and his knights declared war against the ecclesiastical princes of the Empire. Had the peasants risen then, the already frightened princes would have granted anything; or, by combining then with the knights, the power of the princes might have been permanently broken, and a strong imperial government, supported by knights and peasants, might have been established in Germany. But though the avowed ends of the two classes were so similar that they may be pronounced identical for political purposes, Hutten[1] was the only man on the side of the knights with intelligence enough to appreciate the offered opportunity; and pride of class prevented them from seeking such an alliance. It might be interesting, but it would be wholly un-

[1] See his dialogue of 1522, "*Neu Karsthans*," *Op.* 5: 455 *seq.*

profitable, to speculate upon the consequences to the history of Germany and the fortunes of the Reformation that would have resulted from such an alliance. By failure to effect such a combination, the single opportunity of success that offered was lost, and the princes were able to beat their opponents in detail, gaining an easy triumph over foes that if united would as easily have crushed them. The Emperor, absorbed in what he thought were larger schemes, was equally without appreciation of the opportunity offered him by this event, and before he saw it his chance had vanished of becoming the powerful head of a united Germany. Henceforth he remained only the proud possessor of an empty title. The only gainers were the princes, who came out of the struggle with greatly increased power, and found themselves on the safe road to complete domination in the Empire. The only danger with which they now had to reckon was the possible combination of the free cities against them, a combination that would be dangerous on account of the growing wealth of the towns and their consequent ability to outbid others for the services of the soldiers of fortune on whose aid, throughout this century, the fortunes of war were to turn.

Luther had foreseen and predicted these civil commotions, though doubtless not the precise forms that they assumed in the revolts of knights and peasants. Yet his words strikingly conform to the main facts, when he wrote to his friend Link, nearly two years before the trouble: "I greatly fear that, if the princes continue to hearken to the foolish brains of Duke George, there will be a rebellion throughout all Germany against princes and governments and the whole spiritual order—for so this matter appears to me. The people are everywhere disturbed, and they have eyes and will no longer be oppressed by force, nor can this be done. It is the Lord's doing, and he conceals these menaces and overhanging perils from the eyes of the princes; through their blindness and excessive violence he will bring things to such a pass, so it seems to me, that I shall see Germany swim in blood. . . . They should understand that the people are not what they once were; they should know that the sword is near their own house, their own throat perhaps. . . . I believe that I speak this in the Spirit." [1] But though he had a prevision of the trouble, he none the less recoiled from it when it came, and it forced him to consider more carefully than before the whole question of civil government and the relations to it of citizens in general, and also of the clergy and all matters spiritual. In other words, the exigences of the Reformation, no less than the disorders in society, demanded that the leader of the new movement should think out and teach a workable theory of the relations of Church and State, and the

[1] Walch, 15: 2611; De Wette, 2: 156.

way in which Christian men should discharge their civil and religious duties.

There had been several attempts before Luther's day to state a political theory that would justify opposition to the encroachments of the Papacy and an attempt at reformation, yet at the same time establish secular institutions on a firm basis. Dante had made a remarkable contribution to political theory in his *De Monarchia*, in which he set forth as his ideal two world dominions, each ordained by God to be supreme in its sphere, one secular, one spiritual, the Empire and the Church. Dante's theory had proved very influential; men found it hard to escape from the glamour of it; but it had proved itself to be utterly unworkable. The continuous conflict between the Popes and the Emperors that makes up the greater part of medieval history was convincing testimony to the fact that two such equal world dominions could not coexist in the world of fact—one must prove superior to the other, and conflict must continue until one had overcome the other. Not long after Dante, a countryman of his, Marsiglio of Padua, composed a treatise that he called *Defensor Pacis*, which appealed to his own age much less than that of Dante, but anticipated to a remarkable degree the political theories of modern times. Marsiglio is perhaps entitled to no more honor as the originator of a system than Dante; each may be given the praise of clearly expounding a theory that others had suggested.

The germ of his theory Marsiglio found in the "Politics" of Aristotle, who taught that the legislator is the people, or a majority of them, commanding or determining that something be done or refrained from, in the field of social action, under penalty of some temporal punishment. Civil government is of divine origin, in the sense that man has been created by God a social animal, and government is a necessity of social existence. These ideas derived from Aristotle, Marsiglio uses in a Christian sense and develops their necessary consequences as applied to both secular and ecclesiastical government. Every civil ruler is the representative of his people, and when he acts as legislator, law is valid because he is their representative. In the same way, the Church is the general body of the faithful who believe and call upon the name of Christ; and ultimate authority rests in the whole, and not in any part. The organ of authority is a general council, representing the whole Church, and having supreme jurisdiction in religion. The Church's function is teaching, not compulsion, and even a council therefore cannot enforce its decrees. There is no real power of the keys; the priest bears the keys as a humble servitor; he cannot remit penalty, but God alone. The Pope has just so much jurisdiction as any bishop, and a precedence in dignity only.

But while such a political theory was in exact accord with the spirit of the Reformation, and was to be the ultimate ground of Protestantism, it was far too advanced to commend itself to Luther, even had he been familiar with it. But there is no reason to believe that he had ever read, or even heard of, the *Defensor Pacis*, though some of its reasonings were in the air during his age. To these he listened only to repudiate them. He was doubtless equally ignorant of the *De Monarchia*, but its theory was much more in consonance with his own thinking and demanded only slight modification to be accepted by him. With Dante, Luther believed that God had immediately instituted civil government, not mediately through the constitution of man. The secular ruler, he insisted, derived his authority directly from God, and not from the people as their representative. The ruler was the representative of God, not of the people, and therefore accountable to God only for the exercise of his power. The people could not call him to account in any way, and must endure his misrule with what patience they might, as the will of God, as inescapable as the climate, or sickness, or death. Under no circumstances might they refuse obedience or rebel against lawful authority. Princes and nobles owed the same obedience to the Emperor that the people owed to them, and it was not lawful to take up the sword even in self-defense against lawful authority. Later advocates of the divine right of kings might find a whole arsenal of weapons in the teachings of Luther. He would recognize but one exception: God had also ordained a spiritual kingdom, consisting of those who believed on His Son. When rulers invaded this kingdom and presumed to command what God forbade, a passive resistance to them was lawful, and even the duty of a Christian, who must for conscience sake suffer whatever punishment might be inflicted for his disobedience.

In several tracts published before the outbreaks, he had set forth this conception of civil government and its relations to the kingdom of God, especially in one "On Secular Authority" printed in 1523.[1] In this he relies for proof of his fundamental proposition that the State exists by God's will chiefly on Rom. 13: 1, 2, though he also quotes 1 Pet. 2: 13, 14. The right of the sword, he says, has existed from the beginning of human society, and Christ confirmed it when he said to Peter, "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword" (Matt. 26: 52). If the world were made up of true Christians, it would need no prince, king, sword or law, for they who have the Holy Spirit in their hearts suffer wrong gladly, but do wrong to no one. But the world is and remains unchristian; God has therefore established civil government, and gave

[1] *Von Weltlicher Oberkeit, wie weit man ihr Gehorsam schuldig sei* (1523), LDS, 22: 59 *seq.*

it the sword to compel the wicked to be orderly. Christians, though they do not need it for themselves, render cheerful obedience to this government, through love of others who do need it. The sword is a great and necessary utility to the whole world for the maintenance of peace, the punishment of wrong, and the restraint of the wicked. So the Christian pays tribute and tax, honors civil authority, serves, assists, does everything he can to maintain that authority with honor and fear. But civil government has no jurisdiction in spiritual things—here we must obey God rather than man.

Luther was thus careful to found civil authority on the ordinance of God, because it was clear to him that it could not be founded on anything else, certainly not on the character and fitness of rulers to rule. Their claim to obedience from their people was official, not personal; their office was divine, even if their character was Satanic. He speaks with his usual plainness, and with what under all the circumstances was startling boldness, on this point: "From the beginning of the world," he says, "a wise prince has been a rare bird; yet a pious prince has been much rarer. They are commonly the greatest fools or the worst rascals on earth; therefore one may always anticipate the worst of them, and little good must be expected, especially in spiritual matters that belong to the salvation of souls. For they are God's jailers and hangmen, and his divine wrath makes use of them to punish the wicked and maintain outward peace. He is a great Lord, our God, and therefore he must and will have such noble, high-born, rich hangmen."

These ideas Luther continued from this time to expound, sometimes with greater fulness than in the earlier writings, but with no modification of principle:

> It is the law of Christ not to resist evil, not to grasp the sword, not to defend ourselves, not to revenge ourselves, but to give up life and property, that he may take who will. For we have yet enough remaining in our Lord, who will not forsake us, since he has so promised. Suffering, suffering, the cross, the cross, is the law of Christ; this and nothing else. Will you thus fight and not agree to let the coat go with the cloak, but try to get back the cloak again, though you should rather wish to die and leave the body, than not to love your enemies and do them good? O you easy Christians! Dear friends, Christians are not so common, that they can be gathered in a heap; a Christian is a rare bird. Would to God the most of us were only good, pious heathen, observing the natural, to say nothing of the Christian law! Christians are not to fight for themselves with the sword or arquebus, but with the cross and patience; even as their general, Christ, does not wield the sword but hangs upon the cross. Hence their victory does not lie in conquest or dominion or power, but in defeat and weakness, as St. Paul says: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but in

God"; and again, "His strength shall be made perfect in our weakness." According to the Scripture, it is not proper for anyone who will be a Christian to set himself up against the authority that God has placed over him, be it just or unjust; but a Christian should suffer violence and wrong, especially from his sovereign. For although Imperial Majesty does wrong and violates duty and oath, his imperial sovereignty is not thereby abolished, nor the allegiance of his subjects, as long as the real and the Electoral princes regard him as Emperor and do not depose him. Yet though an Emperor or prince break all the commandments of God, he still remains Emperor and prince and is bound to God in a higher, and then to man in a lower, degree. Were it right to resist Imperial Majesty when it does wrong, then we might do so in all cases, and remain without any authority and any obedience in the world, since every subject could use this argument, that his sovereign broke the laws of God. How then shall we act? Let it be granted to Imperial Majesty that no prince or Lord shall defend us against him, but that the land and the people lie open to the Emperor as his own; and God commands this, and no one should desire otherwise of his princes and lords. Everyone should then stand for himself, and maintain his faith at the risk of his body and his life, and not drag the princes into danger with him, or trouble them with petitions for aid, but let the Emperor do with his own as he will, so long as he is Emperor. But if the Emperor desire, beyond the fact that the land and people lie open to him, to compel the princes also to attack, besiege, slay and banish their subjects for the Gospel's sake, and the princes know that in this the Emperor is wrong, and against God, then it falls back upon their own faith, for they should not obey the Emperor in what they do not approve, not help him, nor become partners of his sin; it is enough that the land and the people are left unprotected and the Emperor unhindered, and they should say: If the Emperor wishes to persecute our subjects, as they are also his own, he may act according to his conscience—we are not able to prevent him. But we will not help him to it, nor approve of his course, for we must obey God rather than man.[1]

It was quite in accord with these principles that, in his earlier writings, Luther opposed persecution of those called heretics. In his "Address" to the nobility he uttered these noble words: "We should overcome heretics with books, not with fire, as the old Fathers did. If there were any skill in overcoming heretics with fire, the executioner would be the most learned doctor in the world; and there would be no need to study, but he that could gather another into his power could burn him." "We shall never unite them by force, by driving or hurrying them. We must

[1] Hottinger, Life of Zwingli, Harrisburg, 1856, pp. 339–341. Cf. letter to Elector John, March 6, 1530, in De Wette, 3: 560, and Melanchthon's response to the same Elector's question whether it was lawful to take the sword against the Emperor in self-defense. CR, 1: 600.

be patient and use gentleness." He repeats these ideas in his tract on "Secular Authority." Heresy, he says, can never be suppressed by authority; God's word will overcome it. Heresy is a spiritual thing, which cannot be cut by any steel, or burned with any fire, or drowned in any water.[2] In 1522, in a sermon against Carlstadt, he said: "I will preach, I will talk, I will write, but I will force and constrain no man with violence, for faith is by nature voluntary and uncompelled, and is to be received without compulsion."[3] In 1524 he wrote to the princes of Saxony: "Your princely graces should not restrain the office of the word. Men should be allowed confidently and freely to preach what they can and against whom they will, for, as I have said, there must be sects and the word of God must be afield and fight. . . . If their spirit is right, it will not be afraid of us and will stand its ground. If ours is right, it will not be afraid of them nor of any. We should let the spirits have free course."[4]

But the thing to which Luther excepted most was any attempt of the people to right their wrongs by force. There is an apparent inconsistency in his words, but not in his ideas. When he said to the princes, "The people will not and can not longer bear your tyranny and iniquity. Thus is no longer a world, as aforetime, in which you hunt and chase men as wild beasts"—he was merely stating a fact, or giving a reasonable forecast of the future, not approving such action. "Insurrection is never justified," he said, "for it generally injures the innocent rather than the guilty. Therefore no rebellion is justifiable, however just a cause it may have. The rioter does not distinguish, but when Herr Omnes rises he strikes into the crowd as it stands and cannot help doing grievous injustice. No man may be a judge in his own cause; and sedition is nothing less than judging and avenging oneself. God cannot suffer that."[5]

In working out these political theories, Luther had no ulterior motives, and was not conscious of their possible utility in the constitutional and social struggle then going on in Germany. Nor were the princes any better fitted than he to appreciate the value of these theories for the extension of their power. With the exception of the Landgrave of Hesse,

[1] Wace and Bucheim, pp. 75, 77.
[2] Prop. 33 condemned by Leo X in the bull of excommunication, maintains that "to burn heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Ghost." In his *Grund und Ursache aller Artikel* (1520) Luther defends this proposition. LDS, 24: 139. It is interesting to note in passing that, by this infallible decision, it remains the doctrine of the Roman Church that it is according to the will of the Holy Ghost to burn heretics.
[3] LDS, 28: 219.
[4] De Wette, 2: 547.
[5] *Eine treue Vermahnung zu allen Christen, sich zu verhüten vor Aufruhr und Empörung.* 1522. LDS, 22: 43 *seq.*

none of the princes had an intellect of more than the third grade, and he shines rather by virtue of the stupidity of his compeers than by his own real brilliance—in the darkness of midnight even a tallow candle may seem a great luminary. But even the least intelligent of despots have often manifested an instinctive preference for whatever theory might promote their usurpations and justify their misgovernment. Thanks to some such instinct, rather than to any process of thought or deliberate choice, the princes recognized in Luther and his teaching their most effective ally. Elector Frederick led the way, but the others did not so much follow him as adopt the same course for the same reasons.

Charles V, though far more intelligent than any of the German princes, did not understand the social and political condition of the Empire. During the first decade of his reign he was as one who plays a game with old hands, not only before he acquires skill but without having learned the rules. Such a one may in time become a great player, but for a while his defeat is certain. Charles was unfortunately compelled at the very outset to make choice between two lines of policy, and while he made the only choice possible to one of his antecedents, as well as the one pressed upon him by every trusted adviser, it was a choice most unfortunate for the cause of imperial constitutionalism. A revolt of Germany against the Papacy had become a historical necessity and a moral certainty—it was the only possible resultant of the existing political and social forces. If this revolt could have been led by the Emperor, he might have made himself the strongest power in the Empire. By refusing to lead, and choosing instead to ally himself with the enemy and plunderer of Germany, he left a great opportunity for the princes to assume the leadership of the national movement, and thus reduce the imperial power to a mere shadow. Charles knew that he risked his empire, but did as his conscience directed—and lost. The princes only dimly comprehended the value of the weapon thus thrust into their hands, but they used it, albeit feebly—and won.

In many ways, therefore, the revolt of the peasants marks a great change in the current of events. It roused fresh alarms among the men who were afraid of all change. As matters progressed, the alarm increased; complaints and threats were made. There was much talk about these things at the second Diet of Nürnberg. The peasants' uprising confirmed the fears of the timid, and caused them to take sides definitely against the Reformation. Erasmus found in these great disturbances a fulfillment of all his predictions and a justification of his course toward Luther. Luther's vehement opposition to the enthusiasts separated him from them, not only in fact but also in the public mind. And thus there was a sifting, a gathering of like to like. Luther separated him-

self from the violent and fanatical; the cautious and conservative separated themselves from him. To use the figure so often used by Luther, Erasmus and others, the plot of the "tragedy" was rapidly unfolding itself. In the confusion of voices it was beginning to be understood which one was to lead, and whether Luther had demonstrated his power to control as well as to raise the tempest. Nothing in his whole life is more impressive, more indicative of power, than the way in which he evoked order out of threatening chaos. As he alone could have aroused the storm, so he alone could have guided it. Bold spirit as he was, he was for a time frightened at the tempest he had raised, and shrank from the consequences of his earlier teaching.[1] He had once repudiated all authority in religion; he was now about to fall back on it. Only, it was the authority of the princes on which he would henceforth rely, instead of that of Pope and Emperor, which he continued to reject. In a few more years the early Luther was to vanish utterly.

In the confusion and excitement following the peasants' war, Luther married. What he had been doing since his return from the Wartburg had looked mainly to the separation of his work from things that did not belong to it. His marriage is of positive, formative significance: it belongs to Lutheranism. July 24, 1525, Melanchthon wrote to his friend Camerarius, "June 13, without giving previous intimation to any of his friends what he intended to do, Luther married Bora." It was Catherine von Bora[2] whom he married, a nun of Nimpsch, educated in the convent there, taking the vows when she was sixteen years old and with eight others escaping April 5, 1523. Two days afterwards she and the rest were in Wittenberg and saw Luther for the first time. From the beginning Luther interested himself in her welfare. He made several attempts to find a husband for her, failing at one time because the man did not want her, and at another because she did not want the man. She was born in January, 1499, poor but of noble family, "not remarkable for beauty," but a healthy, strong, frank and true German woman. So her biographers speak of her, and her portraits by Cranach tell the same story. From the half-playful, half-deferential, always affectionate way in which he alludes to her, it is difficult to determine the exact place that she held in Luther's heart and mind. He was too strong, too self-reliant, to need the help of a wife in his public

[1] Erasmus said in his *Hyperaspistes:* "We have the fruit of your spirit. The mother has gone forward to bloody slaughter, and we fear more atrocious things, unless God shall mercifully avert them. . . . You have indeed in your most bitter little book against the peasants turned suspicion from yourself; and yet you cannot make men believe that the occasion of these tumults was not furnished by your pamphlets, especially those in German. But O Luther, I do not yet think so ill of you as to suppose that you intended this." *Op.*, 10: 1256. E.

[2] See the admirable biography, *Katharina von Bora*, by Albrecht Thoma, Berlin, 1900, especially the last two chapters.

work; too tender, too childlike, too full of sympathy with life not to find comfort in a home. But it is not the marriage of the man, but of the reformer, the leader of a great public movement, that concerns us.[1]

The enemies of the Reformation said that the reformers acted over again the tragedy of Troy, and like Paris involved the world in trouble and wars for the sake of women. The saying was intended partly as a jest; in some cases it was altogether unjust. Luther certainly had no thought of marriage in the beginning of his work, and in marrying later he was influenced by several considerations. First, but probably not chief, he was lonely. His monastery had been deserted by all save himself and his prior. October 9, 1524, he threw off his monk's cowl and appeared in church in the dress of a priest, but he still lived in the monastery. Full of labors, wearied, he cast himself down at night on a bed that for months was not made and on which the mildew gathered. However it might be for others, it evidently was not good for him to be alone; possibly his forlorn condition suggested to him the divine provision against loneliness. Then he was no doubt influenced by the same general motives that influence other men. Besides these, however, the thought that it would please his father for him fully to undo the wrong that he had committed in becoming a monk may have had weight with him. But more than by all other considerations combined, he thought that he was influenced by what he owed to the truth of God.

It is doubtful whether he at once realized the full significance of what he was doing. In this, as almost always, he followed present inclinations, lived by the day, and took no thought for the morrow. Melanchthon intimates this when he remarks on the time of the marriage; the perplexity and anxiety of other men and Luther's apparent unconsciousness of what was troubling everyone else. Far more than he could have thought he was influencing the character of a great institution and the lives of thousands of men. The significance of his marriage appears from the manner in which it was regarded. Of course the papal party was scandalized. What Melanchthon thought may be taken as indicating the feelings of moderate Lutherans: Luther, he thought, had committed no sin, and was not to be blamed; marriage was a holy life and spoken of as honorable in the Scriptures; the time of the marriage, however, was not wisely chosen. He noticed that Luther "was sadder than usual after his marriage, and disturbed by the change in his life," evidently

[1] Melanchthon's letter to Camerarius is our chief authority for the details of Luther's marriage. CR, 1: 754 *seq.* For Luther's ideal of marriage see his sermon of 1525. LDS, 16: 165 *seq.* The circumstance that the bodies of a hundred thousand German peasants lay rotting where they had been slain does not seem to have cast a cloud over his wedding feast, or spoiled his appetite for the game that his friend doubtless sent him as requested. Letter to Spalatin, June 16, 1525. Currie, 149; De Wette, 3: 2.

not at ease in mind. He did not say that Luther had fallen, but mentioned in connection with him the fact that God often permits his servants to fall, that his children might rely on his word, rather than on the authority of any person, however great. It is clear that, on the whole, he would have been better pleased if Luther had not married; and the fact that Melanchthon so felt shows how easy it would have been for the old feeling against the marriage of the clergy to have continued among the reformers, and for them to have divided on that question. The example of Luther, if he had not married, would have told powerfully in favor of clerical celibacy. On the other hand, his marriage was decisive, and settled the question among Protestants forever.

With the changing and development of the movement the actors were also changing. Carlstadt dropped out or was thrust out. Erasmus first became suspicious, then lukewarm and then hostile to Luther's work. There were two others closely connected with Luther who at this time passed away. The first of these was Staupitz, Luther's early friend, his discoverer, teacher, patron. The date of his birth is not known, but while Luther was yet a student he was occupying positions of prominence. He was not a reformer, but he was a representative of the more spiritual phase of the current religion. His pupil soon overtook him and went beyond him. He was with Luther at Augsburg at the time of the interview with Cajetan, and rendered good service by his sympathy and advice, but even then he had sought refuge from the coming storm. He had gone to Salzburg, where in a little while (1522) he became prior of the Benedictine monastery. It was with him as with Erasmus, he was with neither party. Luther blamed him, he blamed Luther, but neither could forget what they had been to each other and they never ceased to be friends. He died in 1524[1]

It was in the midst of the peasants' uprising that the Elector Frederick died, May 5, 1525, weary, disappointed, sick at heart. "Alas," he said, "if it were God's will I should die with joy. I see neither love nor truth, nor any good thing remaining upon earth." He had been Luther's most powerful friend; had done for him what no one else in the world could do; and what he himself could not have done had he been other than he was. It was his wisdom, his moderation, his conservatism, that enabled him to protect Luther. It was as a genuine, unsuspected Catholic that he stood by the monk of Wittenberg and demanded justice for him. In any other character he would not have been heard at Augsburg or at Worms or at Nürnberg. But circumstances were now changed. A party had been formed; something was to be done; and it was not a

[1] Th. Kolde, *Die deutsche Augustiner-Congregation und Johann von Staupitz*, Gotha, 1879, esp. pp. 343-354.

protector, but a leader, that was wanted. The good and wise and brave Frederick had done his work; if he had lived longer he might have been in the way, and so he died. He was sixty-two years old, and had been Duke and Elector thirty-nine years.

Frederick had continued to the end his mediating position. The only distinctly Protestant act of his life was his partaking on his death-bed of the communion in both kinds. He was buried in the castle church at Wittenberg, without Roman rites, Luther and Melanchthon conducting the services, but this perhaps expresses the wish of his successor rather than his own. He was succeeded by his brother, John, afterwards surnamed the Constant, a man of less ability and prudence, but of greater boldness. He was not only the staunch friend of Luther, but his docile pupil and follower; during his reign (1525-1532) it is hardly exaggeration to say that in things religious Luther was the real ruler of Saxony. John allied himself with Philip of Hesse, both now declared openly for reform, and to this alliance was due the great series of changes in ecclesiastical affairs that marked the next five years in Germany. Reformation was now to begin in earnest.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST DIET OF SPEYER AND THE NEW CHURCH ORDER

For five years forces had been working independently in Germany. There had been no coercion or repression or active interference from without. What the Germans had done they had done of their own accord, and they equally followed their own will in what they did not do. The condemned Luther continued to teach in the university of Wittenberg, to enjoy the friendship of the Elector, to come and go without let or hindrance, and in all respects to be and act as if there had never been a bull of excommunication or an imperial edict against him. Neither the Emperor nor yet the imperial Diet raised a hand against him. No one was willing to take the responsibility of beginning a war of parties. The uncertainty and danger involved in any positive repressive measures compelled a policy of inaction: there was a drifting, an unresisting movement with the tide. This policy of inaction did not please the Emperor, who insisted on the enforcement of the edict of Worms, but was powerless to compel obedience to his will. The conditions were wanting in which he could be formidable to the new party. He was at war with France; part of the time there were serious disturbances in Spain; all the time danger was more or less imminent from the Turks. Ever since the second Diet at Nürnberg, it was clear that only the Emperor could repress the Lutherans; and, as we have already seen, he could do it only when he was at peace with his neighbors.

His greatest difficulty arose from his relations with the French. His first efforts against them in Italy had been successful: Milan was taken; Francis Sforza, the lawful Duke, was reinstated; and Parma and Placentia were restored to the Papal See. But this did not end the war. The only logical end to it was the overthrow of one of the parties, and in the circumstances this was not easy of accomplishment. Both powers were great in resources and both were ambitious. There was, however, no regular system of taxation or certain source of revenue, and consequently no national credit, properly so called. As a rule, a battle was the end of a victorious, as well as of a beaten, army; the one was scattered by defeat, the other was disbanded for lack of money to keep it together. When by loan, or gift, or extraordinary levy there was a new supply of money, there could be new armies and a renewal of the war. When so small a thing as the possession of a few hundred thousand

crowns could give one of the great sovereigns a dangerous prominence, it necessarily followed that treaties and alliances had no stability. The confederates of one year might easily be the antagonists of another.

The war between the Emperor and Francis I, with its alternations of failure and success, might have gone on indefinitely but for the stubborn pride of Francis. Having collected a large army in the fall of 1524, he invaded Italy in person, crossing the Alps at Mont Cenis, and by rapid marches reaching and taking Milan before necessary means for its defense could be brought together. There was substantially no imperial or other force to oppose him, and by well directed energy he might have crushed the small Spanish army that had abandoned Milan, because too weak to defend it. But as his fortune would have it, he attempted the taking of Pavia, into which his enemies threw a garrison of six thousand men, commanded by Antonio de Levya, a brave, skillful, resolute officer. For a time Francis had an open field and could conduct the siege in his own way. There was no outside force to disturb him, and as time passed on the spectacle of a French army besieging an imperial garrison as if it were a matter in which no one else had any concern, became a subject of ridicule. The wits of Rome offered a reward to anyone who would find the imperial army, that since October had been lost. It was not altogether lost, but it was far too weak to risk a battle with the French. Levya must hold out until his friends could collect a force for his relief. The duty of collecting this force fell on three men: Lannoy, the viceroy of Naples; Pescara, the commander of the imperial army that had fled before Francis; and Bourbon, who had been driven by slight, suspicion and injury to revolt against his sovereign, the French king. These men exerted themselves to the utmost and succeeded.

In the meantime things had been moving in Italy. The Pope, Clement VII, thinking that the success of Francis was assured, withdrew his sympathies from Charles V and concluded a treaty of neutrality with Francis, influenced by the humiliating necessity of siding with the stronger party. The Pope's neutrality gave Francis an open way to Naples, and he accordingly detached six thousand men to operate against that city. The imperial generals disregarded this movement and gave themselves to the relief of Pavia. At last, in February, they had in hand an army nearly equal to that of the French. There were two things that Francis might do: recall the detachment sent toward Naples, and thus secure a decided advantage in numbers; or withdraw from Pavia and avoid the risk of a doubtful engagement. The second was probably the wisest, for the imperialists were without money, and the prospect of battle and the spoils of victory was the only thing that kept them together. To fight might mean ample reward; not to fight meant certain

disintegration. Francis did the very thing that his enemies wished: he had said that he would take Pavia or die in the attempt, and so he fought. He was beaten; he was taken; his army was destroyed. "Madam, all is lost save honor," he wrote to his mother, who in his absence was regent of France.

The battle of Pavia was fought February 24, 1525. The immediate result was the imprisonment of Francis. He was taken to Madrid and kept in close confinement for more than a year. He expected to be treated with a kind of chivalrous courtesy, and he was grievously disappointed. Whatever pity Charles may have felt for his royal captive, he determined to make the most of his opportunity. He did not visit Francis but kept him in seclusion and gave him no intimation of the time or terms of his release. The plan was to wear out his patience and subdue his spirit, so that he would be willing to accept any conditions. Francis was, indeed, reduced to the utmost straits; he became ill, he was expected to die, and his calm and politic jailor was compelled to give him some hope in order to save his life. In his desperation and resentment, Francis seriously thought of abdicating the throne. All these things reminded Charles that by delaying he might lose all—a dead king, or an abdicated king, would not serve his purpose. He at length concluded to offer Francis terms. They were sufficiently severe: Francis was to surrender the Duchy of Burgundy, formerly belonging to Charles's ancestors, but for forty years a part of France; he was to renounce all title to Naples, Milan, Asta, Genoa and Flanders; he was to carry on no secret designs in Italy; when the Emperor wished to go into Italy he was to furnish sixteen galleys, properly equipped, and two hundred thousand crowns with which to man and arm them; he was to pay the pension that the Emperor owed Henry VIII for service against himself; he was to restore the Duke of Bourbon to all his rights and privileges in France; was to leave two of his sons in Spain as pledges for the fulfillment of the treaty; and in case he failed to carry it out he promised to return to Madrid as a prisoner.

These are only a part of the hard conditions. Francis signed them, but at the same time secretly protested in due form that he was forced to it, and that the whole transaction was null and of no force. He was not at once released; the treaty had first to be sent to France, to be ratified by the regent. That having been done he was permitted to proceed under escort to his own dominions;[1] and, on reaching French

[1] As he was going toward France and freedom his two sons, the Dauphin and the Duke of Orleans, were traveling toward Spain and captivity. The parties met at the river Andaye, the boundary between the two countries, in the middle of which an empty boat was moored. With an escort of eight gentlemen, Francis was rowed out to the boat from the Spanish side; and with a similar escort the

soil, it is said that he mounted a horse and galloped away, shouting, "I am still a king!"

In addition to the terms of the treaty already mentioned, the two sovereigns agreed to extirpate the enemies of the Christian religion, and the heresies of the sect of the Lutherans. After public affairs had been settled, they were to make war against the Turks and excommunicated heretics. They were also to arrange for a meeting of representatives of all Christian nations, at which plans were to be devised for a general war in accordance with the wishes of the Pope. The whole force of Christendom was to be directed against Turks and heretics. The Emperor had in mind to use the very first opportunity to execute his office as guardian of the faith and protector of the Holy See. If he had truly been at peace, as he thought he was, the course of history might have been different. But so far from settling all things, the battle of Pavia and the subsequent treaty of Madrid but prepared the way for new combinations and the renewal of the war.

The Emperor's victory had been too complete; it had given him dangerous ascendancy in Europe; especially did it make him too powerful in Italy, from which the French were now entirely excluded. In the long, exciting, often bloody game of politics, no success was to be permitted that destroyed the balance of power. The permanent weakening of France meant danger to the Pope and to Italian liberties.[1] The Emperor already held Naples in the South; he was suspected of designs on Milan in the North; he might, if he chose, be master of the whole country. Coincident with the dread of the Emperor and auxiliary to it, the collapse of the French power, suggesting the possibility of freedom from foreign control, produced a spasm of patriotism, and there was a dream of a united and independent Italy. The Italians were disposed to move in their own behalf. Lannoy at Naples was particularly hated by them. Pescara, an Italian by birth, and admired for his nobility and courage, commanded the Spanish army in the North. Morone, a plausible, able politician, proposed to him that he should distribute his soldiers in small parties among the villages of the Milanese, with an understanding that on a designated night the people should rise and massacre them. The Spanish army out of the way, Pescara, by the help of the Italians, was to get possession of Naples and hold the throne under the Pope. It was a bold scheme. The difficulty in the way of its success

young princes approached from the French side. For a little while father and sons lingered on the boat prepared to receive them, and then parted, the king hastening to reach his own land.

[1] The Cardinal (afterwards Clement VII) seeing those two powers of Spain and France divided in such a manner that peace could hardly be hoped for unless one were balanced equally against the other, etc. Instruction to Cardinal Farnese, Ranke, 3: 59.

was that Pescara was not consistently a traitor: he made known the whole plot to the Emperor.[1]

In point of fact, however, this was the most favorable time that the Papacy was to have during this age for suppressing the revolt against its authority and consolidating its real power. Charles and Francis, at odds about everything else, were alike in their opposition to innovations in religion, and were willing to aid the head of the Church in recovering and maintaining his spiritual authority. Had a Hildebrand or an Innocent then sat on the throne of Peter, a Pope who would have put before all else the interests of the Church, the history of Europe might have been far other than it proved to be under Clement VII. For that Pontiff could not forget that he was of the Medici house; he was an Italian princeling before he was Pope; his secular interests and political ambitions, not his devotion to the Church, held first place in his mind and heart. He was much more concerned to preserve his secular dominions and promote the fortunes of his family than he was to maintain the unity of the Church—better Germany should be lost to the Church than Florence to the Medici. Or, probably, as he viewed the matter, it was impossible for him to be anything else than the head of the Church, while he might easily lose his principality and his family might be driven into exile. A little while before, when the invasion of Francis had alarmed him, he had welcomed the intervention of Charles and hailed him as a deliverer; now he began to fear that in his savior he and his family might find a master. He feared that Charles might attack Rome and make it part of the Empire, or that he would call a council and abridge the Pope's authority. He was disappointed, soured, alienated, as well as frightened. He had come to that point where he remembered all his favors to the Emperor and forgot all the Emperor's favors to him. He wrote a long letter of complaint, which concluded with a threat: if the Emperor did not cease his wrong-doing, his interference in Italy and the troubling of other parts of Christendom, he would move just and holy arms against him to defend the public safety and his own dignity.[2] This letter was dated June 23d. After he had sent it he had misgivings and the next day he sent another letter of a more moderate tone, in which he made no reference to the first.

The Emperor had also offended Henry VIII, partly by neglecting his

[1] Robertson says that Pescara hesitated at first, favoring the plan, but that his courage or his conscience failed him ("Charles V," 2: 99, 100.) Ranke ("Popes," 1: 78) is of a different opinion. He quotes an Italian description of Pescara: "He was proud beyond measure, envious, ungrateful, greedy, violent and cruel; without religion, without humanity; he was born for the very destruction of Italy." Morone said there was no man more faithless than Pescara. Ranke holds that he at once revealed Morone's scheme.

[2] Sarpi, 35.

interests in the treaty of Madrid, and partly by carrying himself somewhat too haughtily in his good fortune. In former times he had written to Henry in his own hand, signing himself, "Your affectionate son and cousin"; now he made use of a secretary and signed himself "Charles," without any flattering addition. Henry also and especially had in mind the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe; he had, too, a sincere pity for "a brother king" in distress and a generous desire to help him. He therefore broke with the Emperor and took sides with his enemies. In a little while all the parties who had been in alliance with Charles were in league against him.

He had failed in his expectations of peace, not simply because the conditions imposed on Francis were too severe, but because he had no means of enforcing them. His victorious army at Pavia came near being changed into a mutinous army, because he had no money with which to pay it. With money he might have followed up his advantage and crushed or intimidated his enemies. As it was, the only real guarantee of the fulfillment of the treaty was the honor of Francis I; and Francis, having sworn to his own hurt, was not the man not to change. On the other hand, situated as Charles was—his enemy active, vigilant, irrepressible, in his hands—it is not strange that he demanded so much. He was not ashamed of the treaty. "The conditions are such," he said, "as I would not have kept secret, for this tends both to the maintaining of the public peace and to the restraining of the enemies of Christendom." The fact that Francis at once repudiated them, and that the Pope at once absolved him from any obligation to keep them, is Charles's best justification for imposing them. His only way to keep his enemy from being dangerous was to make him powerless. There was no court then in the world that would keep faith if it seemed more profitable to break it. That Charles thought the treaty with Francis was worth anything seems then to need explanation: he probably trusted him as a knight of chivalry, and a knight was expected to be truthful. It was disgraceful for him not to be so—in violating his word he forfeited his honor. But Charles failed to bear in mind that Francis as a knight and Francis as the head of a great people were two distinct persons. As a knight, he might feel bound to keep faith; as a king he felt bound to break it. There was one rule for the conduct of the individual gentleman, another for the conduct of States. It was the interest of Charles that Francis should be governed by one; it was the interest of Francis to be governed by the other. But if Charles expected Francis to be governed by nice sentiments of honor, he ought himself to have been governed by the same, and to have treated his captive with the chivalry that was expected. As he failed in this, the sympathies of Europe were against him; men

thought more of his hardness in imposing the treaty than of Francis's perfidy in its violation.

But Charles's treatment of Francis was only one factor in the case; the most influential thing in determining the course of events was the sense of insecurity produced by the Emperor's prominence and success. There was a general feeling that he must be weakened and restrained. Hence a league was formed against him, the active parties to which were Francis I, the Pope and the Venetians. At first Henry VIII was favorable but not active. The confederates pledged themselves to maintain an army of thirty-five thousand foot and six thousand horse, and a fleet of twenty-eight galleys. Their first object was to expel the Emperor's forces from Lombardy and Italy. This particularly concerned the fortunes of Milan and of Francis Sforza, who had suffered at the hands of both French and imperialists. Now he was to be put in possession of his Duchy, to which Francis was to give up all claim, in consideration of fifty thousand crowns annually paid. After affairs in the North were arranged, an attack was to be made on Naples, which on being taken was to be turned over to the Pope as part of the patrimony of St. Peter. But as Francis also had claims on Naples, he was to receive an additional sum of seventy-five thousand crowns a year, as compensation for the surrender of these claims. The Pope was anxious about the fate of Florence, and the confederates pledged themselves to maintain the rule of the Medici in that city. In addition to the money compensation for Milan and Naples, Francis was to have help in forcing the Emperor to restore his sons, held as hostages in Spain. The Venetians would be sufficiently rewarded in the happy riddance of Italy from foreign control, and especially in freedom from the dangers threatening their own territory. The league was formed May 22d, a whole month before the Pope's threatening letter was written.

While his enemies were secretly combining against him, the Emperor was turning his attention to the affairs of Germany. A full Diet met at Speyer, June 25th. It was opened by the Emperor's deputies, the chief of whom was his brother, Ferdinand. As at the two Diets at Nürnberg, the chief things to receive consideration were the public peace and the state of religion. The deputies said that above all things it was the Emperor's will and command, that the Estates of the Empire should take such action that the Christian religion and the ancient rites and customs of the Church might be entirely and universally retained; and that if any should resist this by force, they might be punished; and also that the edict of Worms, published five years before, might be observed and put in force. Amid the changing fortunes of war, and now with the return of peace, the Emperor resisted all change in religion.

His purpose of coercion, suspended for a while, had never been abandoned; the ancient customs must be retained.

The Diet set itself to consider his demand; committees were appointed; investigations were made; the views of parties were ascertained. The situation had not improved; it had rather grown worse. Differences were more sharply defined; the convictions of the new party had deepened, their courage had strengthened, their plans were forming; the difficulties and dangers were greater than ever. It became evident that if the Diet should do anything, it would not be what the Emperor wished it to do. Charles had anticipated and provided for such a contingency: if the Estates would not do what he wished them to do, he would have them do nothing. On August 3d his representatives read a letter of instructions that he had written them from Seville, March 23d, of which they had previously said nothing. It stated that "he was going to Rome to be crowned, and also to treat with the Pope about a council. In the meantime it was his will that the Estates should not decree anything contrary to the ancient customs, canons and ceremonies of the Church, and that all things should be ordered according to the form and tenor of the edict of Worms." He was not unmindful of the complaints of the people, but they "should patiently bear with the delay, until he had treated with the Pope about a council, which should shortly be called." It did no good, he said, to treat of religious matters in a Diet, for the errors and licentiousness of the common people were thereby more confirmed.[1]

The intended effect of the Emperor's letter was to stay all proceedings. The Lutheran party was dissatisfied; they were still to be in danger and suspense. The free cities of upper Germany took the lead. They wished, they said, to please the Emperor, but religious controversies increased daily; it had been dangerous to attempt to enforce the edict of Worms, and the danger had increased. If the Emperor were present and understood the condition of things he would think as they did. Besides, the relief that he promised was illusive. When he wrote his letter he and the Pope were on good terms, and a general council was not out of the question; but now the Pope was his enemy, making war upon him, and there was no likelihood that a council would be called. What they proposed was to inform the Emperor, either through ambassadors or by letter, of the true state of Germany, and how dangerous it was to postpone attention to the business of religion, or to press for the execution of the edict of Worms. He was to be asked to permit the holding of a national council in Germany, as the Diet of Nürnberg had advised. But if, as formerly, he did not approve of a national council, he might

[1] Walch, 16: 191–193.

suspend the execution of the edict of Worms until a general council should meet. They also suggested that "in the discord and dissension, so long as every man was forced to be solicitous about his own private concerns, it would be very difficult and uneasy to contribute money for the aid and assistance of others."

The case in the Diet was briefly this: The Lutherans thought that there was no prospect of a general council; that dangers were threatening; and that burdens were to be removed; consequently that no time was to be lost. On the other hand, the papal party were unwilling to do anything in opposition to the Emperor's expressed wishes; they would wait until Emperor and Pope were at one. Feeling ran high; the Elector of Saxony threatened to withdraw; the Diet seemed about to be dissolved; there was a vivid recollection of the disturbances of the past year, and even greater were feared unless something were done. Ferdinand and the Archbishop of Trier interfered and a compromise was effected. On August 7th the Diet decreed: That for establishing religion and maintaining peace and quietness, it was necessary that there should be a lawful general or provincial council for Germany, held within a year. And that no delay or impediment might intervene, ambassadors should be sent to the Emperor to pray him to look upon the miserable and tumultuous state of the Empire, and come into Germany as soon as he could, and procure a council. After much discussion it was further decreed, on August 27th, that, "while awaiting the sitting of the Council or a national assembly, with our subjects, on the matters which the edict published by his Imperial Majesty at the Diet held at Worms may concern, each one so to live, govern and carry himself as he hopes and trusts to answer it to God and His Imperial Majesty." [1] While this was, in form, nothing more than a postponement of the question, it was in fact a charter of mutual toleration. Each Estate of the Empire was left free to take its own course in matters pertaining to religion. The decree is the historic origin of that territorial system that henceforth was to be peculiar to Germany, and was afterwards embodied in the maxim, *Cujus regio, ejus religio*—the religion of the government determines that of the subject. It was a compromise dictated by the nearly balanced state of the Empire, princes and people being so equally divided in allegiance to the old and the new in religion that neither party believed an overt act against its opponent to be expedient, or even possible. In a few months after the adoption of the decree, the Catholic party was still less favorable to coercion. The election of Archduke Ferdinand as King of Bohemia, in October, greatly

[1] *Ein jeglicher . . . für sich also zu leben, zu regieren und zu halten, wie ein jeder solches gegen Gott und kaiserliche Majestät hoffi und vertraut zu verantworten.* Kidd, "Documents," 185. The original in full in Walch, 16: 210.

offended Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, the mainstay of the Catholic party in the South, as Duke George of Saxony was in the North. Jealous of this increase of the power and influence of the Habsburgs, Maximilian sullenly held aloof from the Emperor and by his attitude made interference with affairs in Germany for the time impossible.

Even before the Diet thus gave a free hand to the princes and cities, the work of reformation had been actively begun in one of the States of the Empire. Prussia had been, from the time of Frederick II and Innocent III, the possesion of the Teutonic knights, a military-religious order originating during the crusades. The Grand Master of the order had been made a prince of the Empire. The incompatibility of the military and the monastic life had long been evident, and the degeneracy of the order was a public scandal. Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg, was elected Grand Master in 1510, a man of some ability and of greater ambition. The scion of a house that in its numerous agnations had overspread a large part of northern Germany, his plan was from the first to make Prussia and himself more independent. In 1523 Luther addressed a public appeal to the order to forsake their monastic vows for a real chastity according to the Gospel.[1] His pamphlet was the result of a private letter, in which Albert had asked advice concerning the reformation of the order. Albert decided to accept Luther's counsel and act on it; he proceeded to transform the order into a hereditary Duchy, and assigned the members lands on feudal tenure. Several preachers of known evangelical views were sent by Luther to Königsberg, a Lutheran constitution and liturgy were approved July 6, 1525, and the Reformation was formally introduced into Prussia. Duke Albert now assumed entire ecclesiastical authority, and became supreme bishop. While the Diet was in session at Speyer (July 1, 1526) he married a Danish princess, and the work of transformation was virtually complete.

This example had a great effect on the other princes, and was no doubt a determining circumstance in the deliberations at Speyer. On the one hand it stimulated the Emperor's desire that something decisive should be done against these innovations in religion. He had promptly declared the ban of the Empire against Albert, but that was a wholly nugatory act unless the Diet could be persuaded to take the matter up and provide for the execution of the ban. Other princes, notably John of Saxony and Philip of Hesse, had not gone so far as Duke Albert, but were anxious to equal or surpass his achievement. Prussia had afforded the Empire an object-lesson of the practical advantages to

[1] *Ermahnung an die Herren deutsches Ordens, dass sie falsche Keuschheit meiden und zur rechten ehelichen Keuschheit greifen.* LDS, 39: 16 *seq.* Walch, 19: 1730.

be gained by the espousal of the cause of religious freedom—Albert had shown how the pretext of zeal for religion could be made the mask under which there might be wholesale spoliation of the Church and increase of political power. Or, if we suppose that the zeal was genuine—which is stretching credulity to the breaking point, under all the circumstances—Albert had demonstrated that godliness was exceedingly profitable, having the certainty of the life that now is and the promise of the life to come.

The Reformation had raised certain practical questions that had for some time been pressing for answer, and that could not be longer postponed. How should the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, formerly exercised by the Pope through the episcopate, be exercised in the new order was perhaps the most important of these, and certainly the most pressing. Duke Albert had the coöperation of some of his bishops in the reform of the Church in Prussia, but in this he was a solitary exception. In every other state the bishops, scarcely one excepted, remained faithful to the Catholic Church. It seemed a necessity of the case that the princes should take the initiative, assume episcopal jurisdiction and establish the new order. Luther had from the first urged them to do this, and he urged it now. But he had taught other things about the Gospel order impossible to reconcile with such action. A doer rather than a thinker, he had not been conscious of the contradictions in his teaching, but when the time came for him to choose his line and adhere to it, he did not hesitate. In judging his course, we must not forget to allow for his peasant extraction; to ignore it is not only to be unfair to Luther, but to misunderstand much in the history of sixteenth-century Germany. The ingrained deference to rank and respect for superior authority found in the German peasantry as a whole is a leading trait in Luther's character. What was an inherited habit of thought he elevated, as we have already seen, to the plane of a religious duty; and the institutional forms of Lutheranism, as we shall trace their development, should be viewed as the inevitable consequence of Luther's peasant birth and breeding. There was a time when his monastic training threatened to overcome, and did for a time greatly modify, this earlier and deeper-rooted tendency of his nature. But when he engaged in his work as a reformer and threw off his monastic vows, the older feeling reasserted itself with undiminished power.

Luther was too practical and sensible a man to concern himself much about formal consistency, much too sensible and practical to contend for abstract principles when the success of his movement was at stake. There is a time to discuss principle and there is a time to act, and the time had now come in Germany to act. Without organization the party

of reform would lose all that had been gained. They had been engaged hitherto in the work of destruction, and that had been well done; it was now time to build up. Turning his back resolutely and finally on his earlier teaching about the priesthood of all believers, the absolute liberty of every man's conscience, the right of congregations to elect their own ministers, and the like, Luther turned to the princes as the only authority that could bring order out of inextricable confusion. It is easy to condemn this inconsistency; it is hard, not to say impossible, now as it was then, to suggest an alternative course that held out the least promise of success.

In the positive part of their work the reformers began with changes in worship. It has been a question whether doctrines or forms of worship are more sensitive to changing influences—a question that does not admit of a final answer. A change in doctrine would in time be followed by a change in ceremonial; and in like manner a change in ceremonial by one in doctrine. In point of fact, however, corruptions of doctrine usually first manifest themselves in changes of worship, and the first notable reformations of doctrine take form in alterations of ceremonial. This is equivalent to saying that when men are roused to a consciousness of abuses, they correct first those that first attract their attention. Hence the order of reformation is, first in rites and ceremonies, which appeal to the senses; second, in matters of church organization and discipline; and third, in creed or definitions of doctrine. This was the order in the reformed English Church; it was also the order among the Lutherans.

In the case of the Lutherans, the effect of the newly emphasized doctrine of justification by faith was very important. It discredited the mass and reëstablished the Lord's Supper with both the bread and the wine for all communicants. Images disappeared from the churches; monkish vows lost their binding force and monasteries were emptied and closed; asceticism in all its forms came into suspicion; fasts were condemned or neglected; the clergy married. We have seen how these changes were begun by the fanatics at Wittenberg, and how cautiously Luther authorized or disowned them. The destruction of old forms made it necessary that others should be provided to take their place. Not yet ready for the entire abolition of the mass, Luther must prepare a new mass book.[1] As the absolution of the priest was no longer deemed necessary, auricular confession was no longer required.[2] As the Scriptures had come to be the sole authority in matters of faith, they must be read

[1] *Formula missae et commissionis pro ecclesia Wittenbergensi*, Dec. 1523. Sehling, *Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des xvi Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1902, 1: 1–9. Four volumes of this monumental work have thus far appeared.

[2] Luther indeed restored auricular confession and private absolution, after they were set aside by Carlstadt, but he says this private confession should not be perverted or forced on anyone. This in 1522. Gieseler, 4: 540, n. 1.

and expounded to the people, and the sermon had the place of honor. For the same reason, namely, that instruction is a principal thing, the vernacular took the place of Latin in the liturgy, and Latin hymns began to give place to hymns in German. There was no more invocation of the saints, or of the Virgin Mary; the church festivals lost most of their significance; relics were no longer sacred; shrines were shrines no longer, and pilgrims and pilgrimages passed away.[1]

With the change from old rites to new, there was a change in the spirit of the worshipers: the old sense of reverence was weakened, where it was not destroyed; men became hard, disputatious, arrogant, rejoicing in their freedom, impatient of authority. It was not their doctrine, but their position of antagonism that made them so. Gentleness and deference to the views of others are not the virtues of reformers. The fact that they are reformers, especially that they seek to correct great and long-standing abuses in sacred things, implies that they repress or have lost or never had the gentler virtues. There has been only one great Reformer, who, with charity toward the erring, could teach with gentleness and wait with patience the effect of his teaching.[2] It is one of the hateful things about error and corruption that the correction of them itself misleads and corrupts.

The difference between the new and the old churches was great and obtrusive. It forced itself upon the notice of the people. No one could enter a Lutheran church without knowing it to be Lutheran. What was not seen and heard, no less than what was seen and heard, told the tale. The changes had been rapid.[3] In a little more than five years—that is, from Thesis day to the beginning of 1523—many of them had already been made. Luther felt that things were moving too fast; he would change as few things as possible. His maxim was "Whatever is not against Scripture is for Scripture, and Scripture for it."[4] This was the principle by which he was guided in his whole work. It

[1] In the weekday morning service Latin hymns were sung by the scholars, the New Testament was read in Latin and German. German hymns were also sung. There was a sermon every day; on Sunday three sermons, one on the Epistles, one on the Gospels, and the third in the evening on the Old Testament. The Lord's Supper was celebrated every Sunday. "The elevation we do not abolish but retain." This was in the service of 1526. In 1543 Luther says, "We have done away with the elevation in our churches, and I willingly allow it for this reason alone, that such services must not be our masters, as if it were sin to do otherwise." Gieseler, 4: 544; cf. 540, 541.

[2] And even he could say, "I came to cast fire upon the earth, and what do I desire if it is already kindled?" Luke 12: 49.

[3] "In the parish church there was only one mass in the week; besides this on Sundays and festivals. The deacons gave the sacrament of the Supper in full to whoever came, whether he had confessed or not. Nobody but Luther preached." Sebastian Froschel, describing things at Wittenberg when he first went there in 1522. Gieseler, 4: 541.

[4] *Quid ergo non est scripturam pro scriptura est, et scriptura pro eo.* Letter to Melanchthon Jan. 13, 1522. He was defending infant baptism.

is often called the conservative principle of the Lutheran Reformation, as the supremacy of Scripture is called the formal principle, and justification by faith the material principle. In accordance with this conservative principle, Luther felt no call to condemn many things to which the people had become accustomed and regarded as sacred. He would not unnecessarily scandalize the weak or be himself bound. "We must go to work," he said, "with fear and courage before God, be moderate, wait until some things take root, and then additions will come as a matter of course when needed." [1] As he would not be unnecessarily bound himself, neither would he unnecessarily bind others. In 1526 he published his German mass and service book. He says in the preface, "Before all else, I would cordially ask, and for the sake of the Lord, that all who see or would follow this order of ours in the worship of God would not impose it as a law, or bind anybody's conscience thereto, but use their Christian freedom at pleasure, as, where, and as long as, matters make it seemly." In this earnest protestation he had in mind the fact that forms grow into custom, and custom into law; and that things that men at first do because they are seemly or expedient are presently changed into what it is sinful not to do.

He retained much of the paraphernalia of worship.[2] This was partly owing to his indifference in such matters, and partly to a hesitation to give up that to which he and the people were accustomed—he loved a sort of stateliness in worship. But at the same time he was not slow to correct what he thought were positive evils. It grieved him that "God's word had been put to silence and only read or sung." To remedy this, he would have the congregation never come together without preaching. So it was, he said, in the times of the apostles. The Old Testament should be read through, chapter by chapter, half an hour a day, in the morning. In the evening the New Testament should be read. On Sunday all the people were to come together for reading, singing and listening to preaching. The services should be short, so as not to weary the people—an hour is the time mentioned. This was in 1523; three years later the services were more definitely prescribed. There was a decided tendency to increase the number of services. There were many more in 1523 than in 1522, and more in 1526 than in 1523.

The teaching function of the Church was greatly emphasized. There

[1] To Philip of Hesse, Jan., 1527, Gieseler, 4: 521. In reply to Henry VIII he said, "Free, free, free, we will and ought to be in all things outside the Scripture." In 1544 he defined the limits of freedom—in reference to all things neither commanded nor forbidden, *weder geboten noch verboten*. Gieseler, 4: 394.

[2] As to the principal service, the mass in German: "We let the paraphernalia, altar, lights stay till we see reason to change them; whoever will do differently, let him. But in the true mass, with real Christians, the altar should not stay thus and the priest should turn his face to the congregation, as doubtless Christ did in the Supper. That waits its time." Gieseler, 4: 543.

is always a latent power in men that may be called out on occasion, and preachers, like other men, are influenced by the spirit of their time. If little is required of them, they will do little—in a dull and sluggish period they will be sluggish and dull. So it will be until some man rises, prophet-like, to rouse the conscience and kindle the enthusiasm of men. Such a prophet Luther was, and, catching inspiration from him, his preachers magnified their office. Possessed by a present and definite purpose, they spoke with clearness, directness and power. Multitudes gathered to hear them, eager, sympathetic, confident; or, not convinced but wishing to learn; or, it may be, angry, with lips compressed, faces pale and eyes flashing; but all attentive. It was the time of the preacher's opportunity. And before the sermon began and after it ended, the new German hymns thrilled the hearts of singers and hearers alike—songs of patience, of faith, of hope, of courage. Those who have seen men and women gather in some of our great modern religious assemblies, where earnest speeches have been made, stirring sermons preached, and hymns sung by many thousands led by a chorus of trained voices, when feeling has risen too high for shouting and clamor, can realize what these meetings were in the early days of the Lutheran movement. Men were stirred by religious enthusiasm as men had not been stirred in Europe since the days of the crusades.

But this earnestness and excitement was not altogether for righteousness. When from any cause men are freed from the restraints to which they have been accustomed, they are likely to be more or less errant until they adjust themselves to the new situation. Periods of transition are always periods of danger. It was according to all experience that the Lutherans should be tried in passing from the old system to the new, and that many should be found wanting. Some of them were drunken with their new freedom; few were entirely sober. They were like a horse turned loose without a bridle. So long as they believed that forgiveness of sin depended on the absolution of the priest, they stood in awe of him: he could in some measure control them. But when they came to believe that the sacrament of penance was itself an imposition, and that confession and absolution were not necessary to salvation, his power was broken. The temptation was to despise him, in proportion as they had honored him too much. His authority was at an end, and there was nothing to take its place. This was one difficulty, but there was another not less serious: it was a misconception of the doctrine of justification by faith. The people were taught that works were not meritorious,[1] that they did not please God, that they contributed nothing

[1] Luther nominally limited his hostility to good works, to the doctrine taught concerning them by the Roman Church, namely, that they are a means of salvation. But there was a reason for the Protestants' opposition to good works of

to salvation, and that it was dangerous to trust in them. But, if that was true, why should one trouble himself to do good works? There was no logical place for them in the new teaching. It was, indeed, said that good works were the necessary, spontaneous outcome of faith, and that there could be no faith without them; but this did not carry with it any deep sense of obligation to do them. Breathing is natural and spontaneous; life is impossible without it; but we are not under obligation to breathe, in the sense in which we are under obligation to fear God and keep his commandments. Luther's—or rather Paul's—doctrine of justification is a great and true Christian doctrine, but as understood by the Lutheran teachers, as well as by the people, its effect was to weaken men's sense of moral responsibility. Without any restraining external force, and misunderstanding their relations to God, the people were drifting, no one knew whither. Luther's work had been destructive; the time had come for law and organization. The disciplinary machinery of the Roman Church had been removed; other must be created to take its place.

Luther's followers were a multitude; he must change them into a Church. But how would he proceed? After what pattern would he build? He did, not what he would, but what he could. In his first conception, following what he supposed to be the teaching of the New Testament, a single congregation of Christians is a church, having all the rights, powers and functions that belong to the church in any sense. It was the judge of doctrine, could call and ordain teachers, and had the power of excommunication and of discipline generally. It was under no Pope or bishop, neither was it subject to the will or influence of any other congregation: it was independent.[1] Luther insisted that all Christians are equally priests, and have the same power in word and sacrament. This he did early and late: in the Babylonian Cap-

which they were not fully conscious. This doctrine of the Church was selected for special attack because it was the doctrine that gave the Church its hold on the purse of the laity. Luther's early popularity as the opposer of indulgences was due to the national feeling that the sale of indulgences took too much money out of Germany and gave it to a Roman prince. Justification by faith was upheld in Germany, not merely because it seemed truer to Scripture, but because it delivered Germans from paying tribute to Rome.

[1] In his treatise on the power of the Pope Luther says: "Wherever the word of God is preached and believed, there is true faith; and where true faith is, there is the church. Faith has within itself whatever belongs to faith, the keys, the sacraments, the power and all other things." Gieseler, 4: 518. The passage was written in 1519, after the Leipzig disputation. In 1523 Luther said, *Versammlung oder Gemeinde Recht und Macht hat, alle Lehre zu urtheilen, und Lehrer zu berufen ein—und abzusetzen.* Melanchthon de Bonifacio, in 1537: *Cognitio de doctrina pertinet non solum ad Magistratum, sed ad Ecclesiam, hac est, non tantum ad Presbuteros sed etiam ad laicos idoneos ad judicandum.* See Gieseler, 4: 519. He gives full references to authorities; cf. Köstlin, "Theology," 1: 364. But in the Schmalkald Articles (1529) Luther abandons this idea of a spiritual church for a more formal and practicable definition: "Such church is nothing else than the believers in Christ who believe the above stated articles." Art. xii.

tivity in 1520, and in his Exposition of the Psalms, in 1539. It was an essential part of his general teaching that every Christian has the right to judge for himself in religious matters, and may for himself approach God through Christ, his High Priest. He would have no special, privileged, exclusive class in the Church. For the sake of order he required that there should be ordained priests to represent the church and be responsible to it. In the nature of the case, these specially chosen acted with an authority that did not belong to all, but the special priesthood of some did not invalidate the real priesthood of all.[1] In a word, Luther's early conception of the church was very nearly that of the congregational bodies of our time.

In the first attempt to organize the Lutherans into churches distinctly separate from the Romanists, the congregational order was adopted. The attempt was made in Hesse, under the lead of Landgrave Philip, at a synod at Homberg, in October, 1526. The theologian who had the principal part in the synod was Francis Lambert, a converted Franciscan monk, who prepared at the Landgrave's request a scheme of church government.[2] His plan was adopted in the synod, but not in practice, and it need only be mentioned to show how the Reformation leaders, in their first thoughts turned to congregationalism. It was Luther who advised the Landgrave against the proposed scheme; it was impracticable; there was not material for the organization of independent congregational churches. "Rules of order," he said, "could soon be made, if we had the right sort of persons." But they did not have them; the people had had no experience of a congregational church—they had all their lives been ruled by bishops and priests—and besides their inexperience, they were "a wild, rude, noisy people," difficult to manage. Their leaders were almost as helpless as they. They saw, or thought they saw, what was best, but they also saw that that best was unattainable, at least in any way that seemed possible to them. It was with the reformers in the Church, as it had sometimes been with reformers in the State: earnest-souled men, longing for liberty and for civil justice, looked back to the days of the Senate and the Consuls at Rome. Those were times of patriotism, of plain living, of unselfishness, of freedom, of everything to please the lover of virtue and country. Seen through the mist of years, the old Roman state was transfigured,

[1] "Every Christian has and exercises the priestly work; above this is the common office of teacher, . . . for in a church all have not office, nor can the sacraments be fitly celebrated in every house; hence there must be special persons for this; but this is not to make an order of priesthood." Gieseler, 4: 519.

[2] It has been questioned whether he was indebted for his plan to his own order, the Franciscans, or to Zwingli, or to Luther. It is likely that, like Luther and Zwingli themselves, he was following the suggestions of his own independent study of the New Testament.

glorified. Why not bring back the Consuls and the Senate and have again the Republic, as it was in its greatness? The difficulty was that the world had changed since the days of Cincinnatus, and Rome could never again be what Rome was. Rienzi and Arnold of Brescia were impractical dreamers. In the same way, Luther and those with him sought a purified Church; they looked back to the days of the apostles, when every church was a Christian republic, and all the churches were a confederated brotherhood, bound together by no written treaty, but by a common faith and devotion to a common Lord. In this case, too, there was something wanting: the churches, like the Empire, had developed; customs and methods unknown to the apostles had created conditions in which the church of the apostles could not live. The only way to reproduce the church of the apostles was to begin where the apostles began, at the beginning, and do as the apostles did, gather slowly and by units the saved into congregations. To organize this great rabble of Lutheran Christians into apostolic churches was a thing impossible.

But there must be some organization. The churches were without government, and the people were drifting into confusion. They had been accustomed to compulsion, and there must be some one over them to restrain them and compel them to duty. In the old order the bishops had performed this service, and the Lutherans would have been glad to have the help of the bishops, but there were no bishops among them. They might look to the civil rulers, but there was a difficulty in the way: they had learned that the State and the Church are two different things and that "the two regiments, spiritual and secular, are not to be confounded." The one is for piety and the other for external peace. "The secular laws," said Luther in 1523, "are for the body and goods; and the soul God will let no one rule but himself; and when the secular power gives law to the soul, it trespasses on God's rule and destroys the soul." As the State must not interfere with the Church, so the Church must not interfere with the State: the two are separate and distinct.[1] But it was the ideal Church that was distinct from the State: the Church as Luther knew it had always been joined to the State and did not know how to live apart from it. Hence, willing or unwilling, it must look to the State for help.

The first service that the Lutherans required of the State was to appoint some one to take the place of the bishops. There was a conscious feeling that this was incompatible with the doctrine of the separation of the Church and State, and that some apology or explanation was necessary. Accordingly, it was said, Though his royal grace was not

1 Augsburg Confession, art xxvii. Gieseler 4: 521.

appointed to teach and administer in spiritual things, yet it was his duty to prevent divisions and disasters among his subjects, as the Emperor Constantine had to aid the bishops at Nicæa. As time went on, it became clearer to those who needed the help of the magistrate that such help might be lawfully asked and given. In 1525 Luther taught that the princes ought to restrain manifest blasphemies against the name of God. He quoted in proof the example of Christ driving the money-changers out of the Temple with a whip of cords. In 1537 it was thought that princes ought to care for the church because they were chief members of it. In 1540 Melanchthon taught that princes and senators had the right of calling bishops, first because they rule, and second because they are the chief members of the church. The princes might also compel to religious duties. Luther thought it proper for the Elector to enjoin, with penalties, the use of the Catechism, for "if the people will be Christians they ought to be obliged to learn what a Christian ought to know." So the reformers found reasons for doing what they thought to be necessary; and so their conception of the Church was inoperative, because custom and expediency were against it. We might blame them, if we choose, for their inconsistency; it would be better to remember that they inherited and were bound by the developments of the past, from which they saw no way to be loosed. There was no solution of their problem but a far more radical reform than they were ready to undertake—a reform too radical to have any reasonable prospect of success.

The rulers discharged the duties to which the Lutherans called them by appointing superintendents to take the place of the bishops. These were to watch over the lives and doctrines of pastors, and together with them, to constitute a council of the highest ecclesiastical authority. But as in former times many things, especially such as pertained to marriages and wills, belonged to the now defunct bishops' courts, there was needed some tribunal to which they could still be referred. Consistories were established for this purpose—a sort of hybrid, half secular, half ecclesiastical. They had the right of excommunication, which carried with it exclusion from all church privileges (the sermon excepted), civil punishment, suspension from office, and prohibition of labor. The consistories were not the same in all the States, and not until after the establishment of the religious peace of 1555 did they become permanent. There were always some Luthers among them, who wished discipline to belong to the Church alone. In the end, scarcely anything that the reformers thought ought to be in the church was in it. The churches were not independent, self-governing bodies, they could not choose their own pastors, or exclude unworthy members. In place of the old order was the State: princes, councils, consistories. The work was hardly so

well done, and the tyranny was hardly less. Many of the more serious would have been glad to have the bishops back, if they could have come *jure humano* and not *jure divino*. Things did not go so well, especially after the first generous enthusiasm for right and truth had spent itself. Formerly the priests had mastered the people: the clergy now had two masters, the people and the government. "It has come to this," said Luther in 1541, "that we see young masters, even cities, even small muddy towns and villages, that would prevent their pastors and preachers from inveighing in the pulpit against sin or crime, or else chase them away and starve them; and he that takes anything away from them is holy." The people had been taught to rebel against priests and they did not discriminate between the class as a whole and some of the class—they asserted their independence of all.

It was a plan devised by Luther and adopted by the Elector of Saxony that made possible the introduction of order into the churches of that principality. This plan was suggested in a letter that throws so much light on the whole situation, that it should be read with little abbreviation:

> It is a long time since I have made any requests of your Grace; hence they have accumulated. May your Grace therefore have patience, for it cannot be otherwise.
>
> First of all, gracious Lord, I must make known that immoderate complaints are made by the clergy in nearly every place. The peasants positively will not give any more, and among the people there prevails such unthankfulness for God's holy word that undoubtedly a great punishment from God is at hand. If I knew how to do it with a good conscience, I certainly would bring it about that they should have no minister or preacher, and let them live like swine, as indeed they do. There is no fear of God, no more discipline, since the papal ban has gone, and every one does only what he wills. Now, since it is commanded us all, but especially the government, to care first of all for the poor youth that are born daily and are growing up, and to keep them in the fear of God and in good breeding, they must have schools, preachers and pastors. If the parents do not wish this, they may always go to the devil. But where the youth remain neglected and untrained, it is the fault of the government. The land becomes full of a wild and vicious people; so that not only the command of God, but our own safety constrains us to find a remedy.
>
> As, however, in your Grace's principality, papal and clerical restraint and order has ceased, and as all cloisters and endowments have fallen into the hands of your Grace,[1] as the supreme head, there comes along with them the duty and burden of setting things in order. For no one else assumes it nor can assume it. Therefore, as

[1] Both Luther and Melanchthon complained frequently and bitterly of the mismanagement of the church property confiscated by the princes. De Wette, 2: 569, 592; 3: 136, 142. As to Melanchthon, see CR, 4: 695, 882; 5: 770.

I have fully reported to your chancellor, and to Nicholas von Ende, it is necessary that your Grace—as one whom God in such case has commanded and invested with the duty—to order as soon as possible a visitation of the land by four persons: two to have oversight of revenues and property; two capable of judging doctrine and persons. These, by authority of your Grace, should regulate and care for schools and parishes as may be necessary.

Where a city or village has the means, your Grace has power to compel it to support schools, pulpits and pastors. If they are not willing to do this for their own salvation, your Grace, as the official guardian of youth, and of all the needy, should hold them to it by force, so that they must do it—just as they are compelled to contribute for bridges, paths and roads, or other needs of the land. Whatever the country needs, those who use and enjoy it should help pay for. But there is no more necessary thing than to educate those who will come after us and bear rule. If those who are concerned have not the means, and it presses them too heavily, there still remain the monastery estates, which were especially endowed for such purposes and can be so used as to lighten the burden of the common people. For your Grace can easily comprehend that there would be at once a great outcry, and one not easily answered, where the schools and parishes are neglected while the nobility seize upon the monastery estates—which, it is already said, many have actually done. Since, however, such estates bring no revenue to your Grace's treasury, and were originally established for religious purposes, they should in justice first of all be applied to this object. What then remains, your Grace can apply to the benefit of the country, or of the poor people.[1]

It is much to the credit of the Elector that he was so far from offended by such plainness of speech that he adopted the suggestion. He was a phlegmatic man, whose intellectual processes were slow, and repeated urgings were necessary to bring him to act; but in July, 1527, he appointed a commission to visit the parishes of Saxony and set them in order.[2] To Melanchthon was committed the duty of preparing a book of "instructions" for the clergy, that should be a standard of judgment for the commission and a practical manual for the evangelical pastors. Melanchthon prepared a summary of evangelical doctrines, in both Latin and German, in seventeen articles: of faith, the cross, prayer, the fruits of the spirit, the magistrate, the fear of God, righteous-

[1] De Wette, 3: 135; cf. 39, 51. LDS, 53: 386. Currie, 155. The above letter bears date November 22, 1526.

[2] Luther, Justus Jonas, Pomeranius, Spalatin, and other persons of eminence were appointed on the general commission. Melanchthon and five others (John a Plaintz, a knight, Jerome Schurf, Erasmus, *not* of Rotterdam, Fred. Myconius and Justus Menius, a clergyman of Eisenach) inspected Thuringia. Jonas was a professor in the University of Wittenberg (provost); then at Halle helped forward the Reformation until compelled by Duke George to leave; afterwards pastor and filled other important posts. Bugenhagen, on Luther's nomination, became pastor of the Wittenberg church, and was the most efficient helper of Luther and Melanchthon in reorganizing the German church.

ness, judgment, the sacraments, the sign of the eucharist, penitence, marriage, prohibited cases, human traditions, Christian liberty, free-will, the law. It was important chiefly as a first step toward the formal statement of the new understanding of the teaching of Scripture, but lacks the orderly arrangement and felicity of phrase attained in the later confession at Augsburg. Melanchthon was trying his wings for a higher flight.[1]

One of the things most firmly believed by Luther was the necessity of a systematic Christian training for the whole people. It was this conviction that led him to insist so strongly on the duty of the clergy to expound the Scriptures regularly. But as the work of reformation went on, and as he learned through the visitation more about the actual condition of the people, his plan enlarged and at the same time became more definite. He could entertain little rational hope of making any considerable impression on the adults of his own generation, and highly as he esteemed preaching he had no illusions as to its effect. "Many a man listens to preaching for three or four years," he testified, "without learning enough to enable him to make answer, if questioned concerning a single article of faith." But it was different with the rising generation; he did believe it possible, by diligent Christian instruction, to bring about a great change in Germany. And accordingly, as soon as possible, he turned his attention to the composition of two catechisms in German, both of which were issued in 1529.[2]

The first or Larger Catechism, under his hands outgrew the purpose of a catechism, both in length and in form. The method of question and answer was abandoned, and it became in fact a brief compendium of theology, quite unfit for the instruction of the young and never employed for that purpose. But the second, or Smaller Catechism, was a true catechism, so brief and simple as to be well adapted for its purpose. Dr. Schaff well calls it "a great little book, with as many thoughts as words," and quite truly adds that it marks an epoch in the history of religious instruction.[3] None of his writings bears more unmistakable imprint of Luther's genius, and in none is his happy faculty of stating profound religious truth in simple words and racy phrases more strikingly shown. Its defects are chiefly the result of the method adopted—a method sanctioned by ancient usage, but not therefore beyond criticism—to base the catechism, not on the entire teaching of Scripture, but on three familiar liturgical documents: the Decalogue, the Apostle's Creed

[1] CR, 26: 2–27; followed by a version in German by Luther. Also, Sehling, *Kirchenordnungen*, I: 142 *seq.*

[2] LDS, 21: 1–155. The Small Catechism in both German and English is given in Schaff's "Creeds," 3: 74–92.

[3] "Creeds," 1: 245 *seq.*, esp. 250.

and the Lord's Prayer. This method results in an incompleteness that requires the supplementing of the catechism with further religious instruction, as became and continues to be the practice in all Lutheran churches. Yet it may be said without exaggeration that, next to the Bible, no other book has had so wide circulation among the German people or had so profound and lasting an influence on the national character.

The example of Prussia and Electoral Saxony was followed in other German principalities. George, Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach, assisted his brother Albert in the introduction of the Reformation into Prussia, and on his accession to his principality took immediate advantage of the Speyer decree to forward the movement. Prince Wolfgang, of Anhalt, had been profoundly impressed by Luther at the Diet of Worms, and from that time favored the progress of the Reformation in his domain. Duke Ernest, surnamed the Confessor, also introduced the new doctrine and practice into Braunschweig-Lüneberg, where it was accepted by the estates in 1527. The Dukes of Mecklenberg applied to Luther for evangelical preachers as early as 1524, and the preaching of Lutheran doctrine began at about the same time in Silesia and Pomerania. In Northern Germany, in fact, there remained but two States that still maintained allegiance to the Roman Church, and these were held more by the firmness of their rulers than by the disposition of their people. Joachim I of Brandenburg, and George of Saxony, were still staunch upholders of the old faith and the ancient customs, though not without their grievances against the Court of Rome. In Southern Germany, the Church had been more successful in retaining its hold. In Franconia the new gospel had made considerable progress; in the Upper Palatinate it was rather tolerated than at present promoted; while in Würtemberg nothing had prevented its triumph but the character of Duke Ulric, whose conduct brought about his banishment in 1519 and the transfer of the principality to Ferdinand of Austria, who tried by severe persecution to eradicate the new ideas. Notwithstanding his efforts, the free cities of the region—Reutlingen, Esslingen, Ulm, Hall, Biberach—became uncompromisingly anti-Catholic.

The same was true of the free cities elsewhere—indeed, the unanimity and heartiness with which they adopted the Reformation became one of the distinctive features of the movement, and as time went on was proved to be the decisive incident of the Lutheran struggle. Several of these towns had not waited for the Speyer decree to abandon the Catholic faith, but the number of cities that undertook a reform was rapidly increased by the action of the Diet. In the North, all the great commercial towns, Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck, Stralsund and Danzig became Lutheran. Magdeburg also accepted the new faith

and became an active center of the Lutheran propaganda as did Naumburg a little later. In the central region of the Rhine, Frankfort, Worms and Speyer followed this example. In the South, Breslau, Nürnberg and Augsburg had abolished the mass as early as 1524, while Strassburg and Constance were no longer Catholic.[1] Some of these Southern towns were more inclined to the doctrines and methods of Zwingli than of Luther, as we shall soon have occasion to note, but they were at any rate enforcing reforms. Of Central and Southern Germany, only the ecclesiastical principalities of Cologne, Trier and Mainz, together with the important State of Bavaria, were to be counted as fully on the side of the old Church. And of these, Archbishop Albert, of Cologne, was thought to be strongly minded to follow the example of his kinsman of Prussia and secularize his principality. By 1529 the condition of the Roman Church in Germany was indeed little short of desperate; if it were to be saved, something must be done and that right speedily. This was the opportunity of Charles V.

[1] For the actual form that the Reformation assumed in these several cases, see the collection of documents given by Sehling.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND DIET OF SPEYER AND THE PROTEST

FOR some years after the first Diet of Speyer every movement made for the development of Luther's work. We have seen how political complications led to the recess of Speyer, and the consequent opportunity for the organization of the Lutheran Church; all the while the church was organizing, the way was paving for further advances. For the first five years after the edict of Worms the Emperor had been occupied in Spain, and in his wars with Francis I. Now another actor was to come prominently on the stage. Indeed, ever since the taking of Constantinople, in 1453, not to go further back, the Turks had been a menace to Europe; with the accession of Suleiman II to the throne in 1520, they became yet more formidable. He was a great and active ruler, and during his long reign of forty-six years he was always engaged in some aggressive enterprise. In 1522 he startled Christendom by the capture of the island of Rhodes, after a long and heroic defense by the Knights of St. John. He was almost equally powerful by sea and by land; and as he might strike at any time, the only safety was in being always prepared to meet him. The Emperor could make no plans without considering the probabilities of a Turkish war; the Turks, too, were always in the thoughts of the people. In the beginning of the Diet of Speyer, messengers came from King Louis of Hungary, begging assistance against this enemy; and before the Diet had closed news was brought of the great battle of Mohacs, the defeat of the Hungarians and the death of their king (August 29, 1526). This invasion of Hungary by the Turks had its influence in forcing the Diet to adopt its tolerating edict; and the death of King Louis made way for the election of Ferdinand of Austria to the Hungarian throne, and with it the increase of the power of Charles V, who could not but profit by his brother's advancement.

Ferdinand's first duty was to defend his new kingdom, but we need not follow him in his conflict with the Turks and with his rival in Hungary. All the while, however, we may bear in mind, that the war in Hungary had an influence on the events with which we are immediately concerned: it divided the forces of Germany, and besides and especially it rendered it out of the question still further to weaken the Empire by any movement against the Lutherans, whose help was needed against

the common enemy. The Hungarian affair was but an incident, the main drift was in another direction; and our principal concern is with the Emperor and the Holy League. And here it will be worth while to go sufficiently into detail to get some definite impression of the way in which the great game of politics affected the fortunes of Luther and his cause.

Two letters of the Pope to the Emperor have already been mentioned. On September 18, 1526, the Emperor sent a long letter in reply, in which he accused the Pope of many unfriendly acts. Among other things he had stirred up the French king to prolong the war against him; after the peace of Madrid, he had tempted Francis I to violate the treaty; had absolved the king from his oath and entered into a hostile league with him, not only with a view of driving the Emperor out of Italy, but of degrading him from his dignity. "See," he said, "the baseness of the thing. Rome receives more money and profits out of my kingdom and provinces than from all Christendom besides. This may be proved by the demands of the princes of Germany, when, complaining heavily of the Court of Rome, they desired a remedy for their evils." These complaints he had slighted out of respect for the Church. He had given the Pope no just cause of offense; had conferred benefits, had even wronged his subjects for the Pope's sake; and his reward was the Pope's hostility. He begged the Pope to change his course. "But," he said, "if I cannot prevail and you must needs go on like a warrior, I protest and appeal to a council, that all quarrels may there be decided, and demand that it be speedily called."

In a letter to the College of Cardinals, Charles spoke with still greater warmth and plainness. He mentioned again his favoring the Pope at the expense of Germany, and the demands of the German nobles; but because he had been "born and bred with a singular love to the Church of Rome" he had not given ear to their demands; and when greater troubles afterwards arose, and many tumults and riots happened throughout Germany, the princes had for that reason appointed another Diet, he had, under severe penalties forbidden them to assemble, because their deliberations would have been prejudicial to the Pope and the Church of Rome. For the Pope's sake he had alienated the heads of the German nobility. He begged the cardinals to admonish the Pope, and exhort him to peace rather than to war. If the Pope would not call a council, then the cardinals must call it.[1]

These letters were immediately published, and their effect was to strengthen the Lutherans. It was seen how little the Emperor regarded

[1] A serviceable summary of these letters is given by Sleiden, p. 106 *seq.* The originals are in Raynaldus, 12: 561 *seq.*

the Pope's authority as final; that he recognized the justice of the complaints of the Germans; that he looked to a general council for a settlement of the affairs of Christendom. The Pope, too, had been discredited in the face of Europe. He deeply felt his humiliation and was even more than ever anxious to make himself independent of the Emperor. The allies went forward to their hostile purposes; they sent ambassadors to Charles demanding that he should lay down his arms, and consent to such conditions as would secure a general peace; he must restore Milan to Sforza, take Francis's ransom and return his sons to him, and pay the King of England money he had borrowed from him. This last demand the Emperor rightly resented as a piece of impertinence. He could not, he said, lay down his arms, but he was willing to consent to a truce for three years, so that the arms of all might be united against the Turks. As he could not assent to the terms that the allies proposed, he wished them to propose others, saying that he would not be obstinate or unreasonable.

Of course nothing came of the embassy; nothing was expected to come of it; preparations for war went on. From the outset the confederates were weakened by jealousies and contrarieties of interest. They did not trust each other; each was afraid that the other might get some advantage, and that whichever one got what he sought he would thereupon abandon the alliance. Their lack of zeal and coöperation was the Emperor's opportunity. Pescara, who had greatly distinguished himself in Italy, would naturally have commanded the imperial forces if he had been alive; but he had died shortly before, and the command devolved upon the Duke of Bourbon. Acting with vigor, he soon had full possession of Milan, Sforza, who had held the citadel, being compelled to retire. George Frundsberg, the old soldier who encouraged Luther at Worms, brought into Italy 14,000 Germans; Bourbon had with him 6,000 Spaniards; 2,000 Austrians were added to the number—in all 22,000 men. It was an army *sui generis*. The men were without pay and were kept together by the fame and influence of their commander. Their only hope of reward was in victory and the plunder of some great city. With such an army Bourbon began his march in midwinter, uncertain where he would strike. He first thought of attacking Placentia, but cut off from that he turned his eyes toward Bologna; and that being too well prepared, he moved on. Florence was for a while in his thoughts, but difficulties there deterred him; and he next thought of Rome, that great city whose glory and mystery filled the imaginations of men—the city at the sight of which Luther fell upon the ground, and which Goethe in trembling and solicitude, did not dare to believe that he would ever enter until he had actually passed through

the gates. The very thought of attacking it, so bold and bordering so nearly on sacrilege, banished all weariness and filled every breast with enthusiasm.

The Pope seemed fated to trouble, and his own mistakes or worse prepared the way for it. In conformity with his obligations to his allies, he had sent his forces to Lombardy to coöperate with the French and Venetians against the Imperialists. Rome was, therefore, without defense. Cardinal Colonna, whose family had a chronic grudge against the Popes, took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded to enter the city. The Pope took refuge in the castle of St. Angelo, and Colonna plundered at pleasure. As he took only what belonged to the Pope and his friends, the rest of the citizens did not care to oppose him. The Spanish ambassador, profiting by the Pope's ill-fortune, extorted from him an agreement to condone Colonna's offense, and to withdraw his troops from Lombardy. When his army was again in Rome, he repented of his forbearance toward Colonna, degraded him from his cardinalate, excommunicated the rest of the family, and laid waste their possessions. This done, he turned his attention to Naples, which he was to attack in conjunction with the French. But Bourbon's movements alarmed him; Lannoy, the imperial viceroy at Naples, proposed to treat with him; and he agreed to suspend hostilities for eight months, to restore Colonna to favor, to dignity and possessions. On the other hand, Lannoy was to come to Rome and stand between him and harm from Bourbon. Having abandoned his allies, and trusting to the faith and authority of Lannoy, he disbanded his army. Lannoy was anxious to perform his part of the agreement, but if Bourbon had been willing to listen to him the soldiers could not be controlled. They had begun the march to Rome, and to Rome they must go.

On the march Frundsberg had been stricken with paralysis and the responsibility and direction of the army rested with Bourbon, who reached Rome May 5, 1527. He was a man without a country. From his youth a brilliant soldier, and for a time the richest and most powerful subject of France, he had suffered from the jealousy of his sovereign, and at last, under the forms of law, was deprived of his estates. Driven into rebellion against Francis I, he sought and obtained service under the Emperor. The dying Bayard, the embodiment of honor and loyalty, had reproached him with treason. Perhaps his own conscience was not clear; he was not perfectly trusted and could not perfectly trust others. He had rendered great services and Charles had made him great promises, but the Duke could not feel sure that those promises would be fulfilled. Shut out from his own country, separated from the sympathies of men, alone, with a feeling half of desperation, half of defiance, he thought to

win for himself a kingdom and a home. His isolation and the peculiarity of his position, made him feel that the eyes of the world were upon him; and he knew that on the morrow he must either presumptuously fail, or do a deed that would never be forgotten. He determined not to fail. Like commander, like soldiers: they were there before Rome on their own motion, and in spite of the remonstrances of the viceroy; many of them hated the Pope; all of them were desperate from lack of pay and the hope of booty.

There was no time to be lost, for an army was hastening to the relief of Rome. The morning of May 6, the month of balmy air and flowers, under cover of a friendly mist, the assault was made. Bourbon had prepared himself to lead his men. Over his dark armor he drew a white tunic, that every one might recognize him and follow or obey. When the assailants hesitated he seized a scaling ladder, placed it against the wall and attempted to mount; but his feet had scarcely touched the lowest round when he fell, mortally wounded.[1] With great presence of mind he gave orders that his body should be covered, so that the soldiers might not know of his death and be discouraged by it. They recognized him, nevertheless, and revenge was added to their other motives for deeds of bravery—they forced themselves on the wall and swept away all opposition. Rome was taken and suffered as rarely stormed city has suffered from the license and fury of its captors. A sympathetic writer says, "How vivid a lustre was cast over the beginning of the sixteenth century by the splendor of Rome: it designates a period most influential in the development of the human mind. But this day saw the light of the splendor extinguished forever." Before this calamity the population of Rome is said to have been 85,000; after it, there were no more than 32,000.

The Pope, dazed and confused by the threatening storm, did not use even those means of defense within his powers. Instead of escaping from the city as he might have done, he shut himself up in the Castle of St. Angelo, and was completely in the power of his enemies. The news of the calamity of Rome and of the Pope's situation everywhere produced the same impression. At Madrid, there was feasting and rejoicing on account of the birth of a son to the Emperor. Charles at once ordered the festivities to cease, disclaimed all responsibility for what Bourbon had done, put himself and his court in mourning, and appointed prayers for the liberation of the Pope. In an age of finesse and dissimulation

[1] Benvenuto Cellini, incomparable swashbuckler, bravo and braggart, as well as great artist, in his Autobiography gives the most vivid account extant of this assault and capture, and claims that he fired the fatal shot at Bourbon. (1: 71, ed. Anne Macdowell, London, 1903.) For the most part I have followed secondary authorities, as Sleidan and Robertson, in the above account of this campaign.

he might easily have been insincere; but remembering the different, even incompatible, sentiments by which men are sometimes governed, one hesitates to say that he was playing a part.[1]

But whatever may have been the real feelings of the Emperor, there can be no doubt as to those of Catholics generally. Interest in the misfortunes of the Pope was intensified by the apparent danger to Europe. In this case as in others, the imperialists had been too successful. Henry VIII was now prepared to coöperate more actively with the confederates, and they felt the necessity of more vigorous efforts. Fortunately for them the Emperor was not able to take advantage of the situation—one tremendous blow had been struck to which there could be no second. Lannoy threw an additional force into Rome, which indeed added to the distress of the helpless city, but contributed nothing to the strength of the imperialists. Bourbon's army had been yet further demoralized by license and plunder; their pay was still overdue, and the soldiers, consulting only their own will, refused to leave quarters so much to their liking. Their idleness and insubordination left the field open. A part of the plan was for Henry VIII to send a force into the Netherlands, but this was never attempted, because of the opposition of the English people, who did not wish their trade with the Netherlanders interrupted. The French and Venetians for a time acted vigorously and effectively. Florence had taken the occasion of the Pope's troubles to revolt from the Medici and set up a government of its own; it now joined the French, and the French commander accomplished everything that he attempted, and carried his conquests as far as he dared. All the north of Italy was within his grasp; Milan might easily have been taken; but he knew that as soon as the allies got what they wanted, they could no longer be expected to trouble themselves about French interests. Instead, therefore, of finishing his work in Lombardy, he turned his steps toward Rome. All the while the Pope had been a prisoner, and it was this threatening movement that compelled the Emperor to decide what was to be done with him. Negotiations were opened; the Pope agreed to pay 450,000 crowns for the use of the Emperor's army, to take no part in the war against him, either in Lombardy or Naples, to grant certain other privileges, and to give security for the fulfillment of the treaty. On these conditions he was set at liberty; the imperial army was, however, still in Rome.

Lautrec, the French commander, with an army of 35,000 men, now turned to Naples. The danger in that direction at length aroused the army in Rome, and it hastened to reach Naples before the French. The

[1] Robertson, however, does not hesitate to call his conduct "an artifice no less hypocritical than gross."—"Charles V," 1: 573.

attempt was successful, and Lautrec was compelled to invest the city. His army cut off supplies by land, and the fleet of Andrew Doria, the great Genoese captain, maintained a close blockade by sea. The imperialists attempted in vain to break the blockade, but what they could not do for themselves their enemies did for them. The Venetians, not caring to take Naples for the French, did not vigorously coöperate with them. The Pope, afraid that Florence, siding with the French, would be permanently lost to the Medici if the French should be successful, threw his influence against them. Francis I, with his fatal aptitude for blundering, alienated the Genoese commander, and drove him into the service of the Emperor; Doria withdrew his fleet from Naples and after a while returned to bring abundant supplies to the garrison which he had before reduced to extremest want. The Prince of Orange, who had succeeded Bourbon at Rome, and now commanded the garrison at Naples, had the enthusiastic support of his men. Lautrec's army was weakened by pestilence. The besiegers became the besieged; Lautrec died; the army attempted a retreat; and the miserable remnant of it was forced to capitulate.

The combination against the Emperor had failed in all its positive expectations. No one of the parties had gained what it sought; all were tired of the war, and all were more or less dependent on the generosity or discretion of the Emperor. There was first a treaty between the Emperor and the Pope, concluded at Barcelona, June, 1528. The Emperor agreed to restore all the territories that had belonged to the ecclesiastical States; to reëstablish the Medici in Florence; to remit the case of Milan to the Pope; and to marry his natural daughter to the head of the house of Medici. The Pope in turn gave the Emperor the investiture of Naples and absolved all who were connected with the plundering of Rome. The next year (July, 1529), at Cambray, peace was made with Francis I, who received back again his sons, so long hostages at Madrid, and scarcely anything else. The Venetians and others, who had been parties against the Emperor, were not considered.

After three years of war and confusion, the political situation did not appear to have been very much changed. In France things were moving on in the usual way. Bourbon, Pescara and Lannoy, great soldiers on the imperial side, and Lautrec on the French side, had died. Genoa had become independent by the efforts of Doria. Milan had again its own ruler, Duke Sforza. Florence was again subject to the Medici; Naples, even more than before, belonged to the Emperor. The Pope had secured more by the favor of the Emperor than he had lost by making war on him. Things looked nearly the same, but they were not the same. A great change was already preparing for England; the wedge

had already entered, which, driven home, was to separate the greatest of modern peoples from the Papacy. Charles V had gone forward in every way. He had been ten years Emperor; his natural powers had developed and seasoned; he had learned much by thought and experience; he had gained confidence in himself; he had come to realize, and the world had been forced to acknowledge, his preëminent position. His dealings with the Pope had taught him how the Papacy was hampered by political complications, and how impossible it was for the Pope to do anything toward the healing of the breach in the Church. Clement was hesitating, vacillating, swayed by conflicting interests; his circumstances, no less than his character, deprived him of the confidence of Europe and unfitted him to lead. Charles saw this, and realized that he himself was the head of Christendom; that the power and the responsibility were with him. He realized, too, the difficulties of his position: on the one hand it was his duty to repress heresy and prevent schism, on the other he had a duty to the State—he must not involve his people in civil war; he must protect the Empire. In all this the Pope might help him, but he could only be a helper. As on the Catholic side the Pope had retired into the second place, so on the other the leadership had passed from Luther to the secular princes. He was still necessary to his cause, but Wittenberg was no longer the center and source of its power.

While these things were doing in Italy, an affair had occurred in Germany, unimportant in itself, that was to have serious consequences for the cause of the Reformation. The villainy of a needy lawyer came near precipitating a war between the Catholics and the Lutherans. Otto Pack, an officer at the court of Duke George of Saxony, privately informed Philip of Hesse that Duke George, Ferdinand, the Dukes of Bavaria and others had entered into a conspiracy against him and the Elector of Saxony. He gave the Landgrave a copy of the agreement and promised to show him the original. Philip and the Elector began immediately to make preparations for defense, and when they thought themselves ready published the pretended agreement and sent letters to the parties implicated and asked explanations. The accused princes at once denied having made such an agreement. The Count Palatine and the Archbishop of Trier, so often a peacemaker, effected a reconciliation, but the incident served to reveal, and at the same time to increase, the antagonism of the parties to each other. It is a satisfaction to add that Pack was afterwards convicted of his forgeries and beheaded. This interesting affair occurred in the latter part of 1527.[1]

The villainy of Pack and the too ready credulity of Landgrave Philip,

[1] For the documents in this case, see Walch, 16: 373 *seq.*

had between them nearly effected the ruin of the Lutheran cause. That prince, who was rapidly winning recognition as the leader of the party, was led to take a most questionable step. It had hitherto been recognized as part of the constitution of the Empire that no German State should make a league with any outside Power. Not until the Treaty of Westphalia, in 1648, was the right to make such alliances given legal recognition, and the introduction of that principle into the imperial constitution is rightly recognized by all students of political history as the virtual dissolution of the Empire. At this time, the making of such a league was on all hands regarded as little short of treason to the fatherland. In spite of this unwritten law, respected as it was above much law that was written, Philip appealed to France and Bohemia to become his allies in resisting the attack that he supposed to be threatened. It is an ancient maxim that necessity knows no law, and had the event proved the fears of Philip to be well-founded his conduct might have had some excuse. In appealing to Bohemia, he was of course within his rights, as Bohemia was at least a nominal part of the Empire; but in turning to France he violated every tradition that Germans had hitherto held dear. The disowning of the alleged agreement of the Catholic princes, and the condign punishment of Pack, not only made the action of Philip appear pusillanimous and ridiculous, but rendered his conduct odious to all Germany. Other princes hesitated to become known as allies of a man who had shown himself in a supposed crisis to be possessed of so little judgment, prudence and patriotism.

It was now the spring of 1529, and time for the meeting of the imperial Diet, to be held again this year at Speyer, and to be known as one of the most memorable sessions in the history of the Empire. The Lutherans came disorganized and discouraged to face a compact, confident Catholic opposition. The Emperor was still too busy with his diplomacy in Italy to be present in person, though he was aware that the affairs of Germany urgently demanded his attention; and his brother, Ferdinand of Austria, presided as his deputy. The treaty of Cambray was not yet concluded, but the power of his enemies was broken; peace seemed assured for some years, at least, and he promised the Estates that he would come to Germany as soon as his affairs elsewhere would permit. It was quite evident that the imperial authority, and whatever weight Charles derived from his ascendancy in Europe, was to be used for the settlement of the religious troubles of Germany.

And it was speedily manifest that the Emperor's convictions and policy had undergone no change since his first Diet at Worms; he still intended, as he there declared, to endeavor to suppress the new religious doctrines and practices and restore the Catholic faith and rites through-

out the Empire. This was disclosed to the Diet by the announcement of his commissioners, early in the session, that he abolished "by his imperial and absolute authority" the Speyer recess of 1526, which, he said, had been the cause "of much ill counsel and misunderstanding." [1] Of course the Emperor had no such absolute authority as he thus assumed to quash a recess of the Diet, but the acquiescence of the majority of the body in his action had the practical effect of repealing the recess, and gave a quasi-validity to his usurpation of power which, under other circumstances, would have been stoutly resisted by the Estates. With this virtual repeal of the Speyer recess of 1526, the Lutherans were left wholly without authority of law for what they had done in the way of reformation.

The Diet now took up the more important question of deciding what should be the law of the Empire for the future. The demands of Charles through his commissioners were more moderate than we might have expected; he evidently did not think it prudent just then to attempt the undoing of what had been accomplished; there was no insistence that alienated property should be restored to the Church; it was not even asked that the ancient rites should be resumed where they had been discontinued. Charles, for the present at least, was content to play the part of Canute, and speak to the Reformation a "Thus far and no further." The recess that was presented to the Diet for adoption declared that those States of the Empire that had hitherto executed the Worms decree should continue to do so; that in the other States no further innovations should be made, on pain of the imperial ban; it forbade any prince or city to deprive any ecclesiastic or religious corporation of authority or revenues; it declared that sects denying the sacrament of the true body and blood of Christ (by which the Zwinglians were especially intended) should not be tolerated, and that Anabaptists were everywhere to be suppressed; and finally, it provided for a censorship of books. In a word, as between Catholic and Lutheran, things were to remain *in statu quo* until the meeting of a general council, now definitely promised for the following year by both Emperor and Pope, and in the meantime both parties were to make common cause against all other would-be reformers.[2]

The Lutheran princes and towns were much alarmed by this action of the Diet, and those Southern towns that had shown a decided preference for the doctrines of Zwingli were still more alarmed. The process of organization described in the preceding chapter was just fairly begun, and to stop it at this point meant virtual ruin to the work of reform.

[1] Walch, 16: 258. The editor thinks this declaration of the Emperor so important that he has printed it in bold-face type.

[2] Walch, 16: 258 *seq.* Note especially paragraphs 5, 6, 9.

Moreover, this was rightly understood to be merely a first step in the policy of Charles, and to submit tamely to this would make later resistance only the more difficult and indefensible. As soon as the probable demands of the Emperor could be surmised, before they were in form for presentation to the Diet, George Vogler, the chancellor of the Margrave of Brandenburg, was commissioned to draw up a formal reply. This document, presented to the Diet on April 20th, 1529, is the famous Protest, from which the subsequent popular name of the reforming party was derived. Two grounds are alleged by the signers for their refusal to be bound by the action of the Diet. The first is the constitutional argument, that the unanimous vote by which the recess of 1526 had been adopted, and under which they had since acted, could not be rescinded and reversed by a majority vote. No student of constitutional law would say that this is a valid argument; what any parliamentary body can enact, a subsequent session may repeal. That is a fundamental and generally accepted maxim of law. It is an equally fundamental principle that a unanimous vote for a measure gives it no greater legal validity than the vote of a mere majority of one—though there may be a greater moral weight given by unanimity than by a small majority. This part of the Protest, therefore, is neither strong nor convincing. The second ground of objection is very different: the proposed recess, they say, contains things that "concern the glory of God and the welfare and salvation of the souls of every one of us," and as to these they are pledged in baptism and the divine word to hold God as highest King and Lord of lords. In such things they would not obey the majority, because in matters that concern the welfare and salvation of the soul "each stands for himself and must give account before God. Therefore in this sphere no one can make it another's duty to do or decide less or more, which one is not bound to do for other honest, well-founded and good reasons." They would have nothing to answer before God, should they act against their conscience and so lead others astray. They would daily and heartily beseech God to enlighten them and "give his Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth through which we may come with unanimity to a just, true, life-attaining, saving Christian faith, through Christ, our only Mercy-seat, Mediator, Advocate and Saviour. Amen." [1]

It was a pious and brave document, the *Instrumentum Magnum* of the Reformation—the first assertion, by an influential body of rulers, of the supreme authority of Scripture and the rights of the individual conscience. When Luther asserted these same principles at Worms, a lone monk stood against the world. This second assertion was sup-

[1] For the document in full, see Appendix VI.

ported by more than one-third of the power and wealth of Germany, for to the document were appended the signatures of John, Elector of Saxony, George, Margrave of Brandenburg, Ernest, Duke of Lüneberg, Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, and Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt, as well as representatives of fourteen free cities: Strassburg, Nürnberg, Ulm, Constance, Linden, Memmingen, Nördlingen, Heilbronn, Reutlingen, Isny, St. Gall, Wissenberg and Windsheim. Some of these towns were Zwinglian rather than Lutheran, and so had a double reason for protest, for they had been pointedly excluded from the measure of tolerance granted to the Lutherans.

It would be a pleasure to stop with this commendation of the Protest, but it is a duty to point out that the document contained paragraphs inconsistent with its main contention and unworthy of the signers. To their principle that each must stand for himself before God they made exception in the case of the Anabaptists, and express their approval of the article in the recess that made anabaptism a capital offense, to be punished by fire or sword. They also profess to approve the article on a censorship of the press, to be established in each State, but as they never took any steps to establish such a censorship, this must be pronounced an empty pretense. But their declaration about the Anabaptists was neither hypocritical nor empty, as their subsequent conduct showed. The liberty of conscience that the Protestants demanded was, the right of each State of the Empire to establish and maintain whatever religious system it pleased, to compel the adoption of this by all its subjects or citizens, and to persecute all those who claimed the right that the princes asserted for themselves in the name of God and the divine word.

This cheerful acquiescence of the Lutherans in the lethal threats of the Diet against the Anabaptists, brings forcibly to our attention one of the puzzling problems of the Reformation: How could the best men of the sixteenth century have been so blind to the intellectual contradiction and the ethical wickedness of their attitude? One suspects that they might have replied in the words of an American political leader, that it was a condition and not a theory that confronted them. The work of reorganization in the German States had removed the question of toleration from the region of academic discussion into that of practical action. The princes, and Luther as their chief adviser, had forced on them by events the question, How far was dissent from the new order established by civil authority to be permitted for alleged reasons of conscience? What doctrines and practices, other than those definitely prescribed, should be allowed? Like many another, Luther was not a clear thinker about such matters, and he made the initial mistake of confusing order

with uniformity—of order with diversity he had no conception. And he therefore found himself in an embarrassing dilemma: either he must deny much that he had formerly affirmed with vehemence, or he must (as it seemed to him) endanger the success of his work of reorganization, on which he had set his heart.

Many a man has worked out in seclusion what seemed to him a perfect and wholly admirable theory only to find when he had the opportunity to reduce it to practice that it did not work well; or, what is quite as common an experience, he finds that he did not fully believe it himself—that he must make an exception here, and round off a sharp corner there, before he would be willing to apply and abide by it. Luther was by no means as radical as he had been thought to be; he was not as radical as he had at one time thought himself to be; his temperament was that of a conservative, his genius was constructive. In his revolt from Rome he had only partially broken with the feudalism on which the Roman Church was founded, and he easily became subservient to the new State feudalism that was developing in the Empire. We have already traced the process of development, and we now see its result. Luther becomes the obsequious and ignoble tool of the national particularism, at the expense of nationalism. At bottom his antagonism to the Zwinglians, as will presently be made clear, was quite as much political as religious, and this was more emphatically true of his feeling toward the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists sought a true democracy, through a revival of the social gospel proclaimed by Jesus and realized for a time in the primitive Church, and to Luther no heresy could have been greater than this. Nor could any other form of heresy seem more dangerous to the ambitious princes of the Empire.

But even with all explanations and deductions that the most charitably inclined can make, the intellectual and ethical contradictions in Luther's teaching and conduct still remain a problem difficult of solution. Nothing could be more emphatic than his early declarations in favor of complete religious liberty. "We should overcome heretics with books," he said in his "Address to the Christian Nobility," "not with fire, as the old Fathers did. If there were any skill in overcoming heretics with fire, the executioner would be the most learned doctor in the world; and there would be no need to study, but he that could get another into his power could burn him." [1] In his "Babylonian Captivity" he was even more explicit—"I cry aloud on behalf of liberty and conscience, and I proclaim with confidence that no kind of law can with justice be imposed on Christians, whether by men or by angels, except so far as they themselves

[1] Wace and Bucheim, p. 75.

will; for we are free from all." [1] And that this was for some time his practical attitude as well as his theory, is plain. He wrote from his Patmos to Spalatin, when things were most troublous in Wittenberg and he was greatly concerned about their outcome: "See that our Prince does not imbrue his hands in the blood of those new prophets of Zwickau." [2] And a few months later he wrote to the Elector with his own hand: "In this business no sword can counsel or help; God must manage here alone, without any human care or aid." [3] Even when he came to elaborate more fully his views of civil government and the relation of the Christian thereto, he did not modify his opinion concerning persecution—"Heresy is a spiritual thing, that can be cut down by no sword, burned with no fire, drowned with no water. But it is only God's word that does it, as says Paul in 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5." "Every one must believe only because it is God's word, and because he inwardly realizes that it is truth." "It belongs to each and every Christian to recognize and judge concerning doctrine, and it so belongs to them that he is accursed who shall have assailed this right with a single javelin." [4]

But it is doubtful if Luther realized the sweeping character of such declarations and the necessary logical deductions from them. He was really pleading for his own liberty, and putting his particular claim into general statements. The man never lived who did not believe that he should be tolerated; it is the question of tolerating the other man that causes all the difficulty. When the pinch came, Luther discovered that he was not willing to tolerate the other man.[5] He remained opposed to bloodshed, and never approved the putting of heretics to death—so far he would have dissented from the Speyer decree—but he would have all disturbers treated as he had treated Carlstadt: they should be banished from the place where they were a disturbing element. He quite changed his notion of Christian liberty, to correspond with this policy—"If every one now is allowed to handle the faith so as to introduce into the Scriptures his own fancies, and then expound them according to his own understanding, and cares to find only what flatters the populace and the senses, certainly not an article of faith could stand. It is dangerous, yes, terrible in the highest degree, to hear or believe anything against the faith and doctrine of the entire holy Christian Church. He who doubts any article which the Church has believed from the beginning contin-

[1] Wace and Bucheim, *Ib.*, p. 196.
[2] Letter to Spalatin, January 17, 1522, De Wette, 2: 135.
[3] March 5, 1522, De Wette, 2: 137; Currie, 98. Cf. his similar declaration of August 24, 1524, De Wette, 2: 547.
[4] LDS, 22: 90 *seq.*
[5] "In order to avoid trouble, we should not, if possible, suffer contrary teachings in the same State. Even unbelievers should be forced to obey the ten commandments, attend church and outwardly conform." Letter to Metsch, Aug. 26, 1529. De Wette, 3: 498.

ually, does not believe in the Christian Church, and not only condemns the entire Christian Church as an accursed heretic, but condemns even Christ himself, with all the Apostles who established that article of the Church and corroborated it, and that beyond contradiction." [1] "If any teach against a public article of faith which is clearly founded upon the Scriptures and is believed by all Christians . . . for instance, if any one teach that Christ is not God, but a mere man, and like any other prophet, as the Turks and Anabaptists (!) hold, such a person is not to be tolerated, but is to be punished for profanity, for he is not merely a heretic but a blasphemer." [2] Beginning thus by denying the right of any to reject the teaching of the Scripture, by which he meant his own interpretation of Scripture, he developed an increasing tendency to identify his own view with the truth, until he virtually claimed infallibility for himself, and regarded all his enemies as of necessity the enemies of God. "Since I am sure of it," he says, meaning his doctrine, "I shall through it be your judge and the judge of angels, as St. Paul says (Gal. 1: 8), so that he who does not embrace my doctrine cannot be saved. For it is God's doctrine and not my own; therefore the judgment, too, is God's and not mine." [3]

And if we grant that Luther was, as he came to think himself, God's mouthpiece, there might follow an excellent justification of using force to repress contrary teaching. Especially if one looked to the Old Testament and not to the New for precedents as to the treatment of false prophets and teachers of idolatry. "Not that we should kill the preacher," says Luther, lacking to some degree the courage of his logic; "this is unnecessary. But they should be forbidden to do anything apart from and against the Gospel, and should be prevented by force from doing it." [4] In the end he seems to have counseled the utmost severity in some cases: "If they [the priests] continue their mad ravings, it seems to me that there would be no better method and medicine to stay them than that kings and princes did so with force, armed themselves and attacked these pernicious people who poison all the world, and once for all did make an end of their doings with weapons and not with words. For even as we punish thieves with the sword, murderers with the rope, and heretics with fire, wherefore do we not lay hands on these pernicious teachers of damnation, on popes, on cardinals, bishops, and the swarm of the Roman Sodom, yea, with every weapon that lies within our reach, and wherefore do we not wash our hands in their

[1] Letter to Duke Albert of Prussia, April (?), 1532, De Wette, 4: 349–355, esp. 354.
[2] LDS, 39: 250.
[3] *Wieder den falsch gennanten geistlichen Stand des Papstes und der Bischöffe.* LDS, 28: 141–201, esp. 144.
[4] LDS, 22: 49.

blood?" [1] But it is more charitable to conclude that this does not really mean what the letter of such sayings conveys—that this was an outbreak of ill-temper, unfortunately not uncommon with Luther, who when angry wrote whatever came into his mind without the least restraint. Hence it is easier to convict him of apparent inconsistency than any other man of his age; and it is above all things necessary, not merely to avoid doing him injustice, but to a real understanding of what he thought and meant, to strike an average of his sayings on any question in which his feelings were enlisted. Probably the times demanded a leader, who, once having decided his course, would pursue it with unvarying confidence in himself and his conclusions, as well as with a certain brutal vigor; at any rate, needed or not, Luther was that sort of leader.[2]

Protestant and Catholic, both then and later, did not fail to make the most of this inconsistency in the teaching of Luther and the conduct of the Lutherans—

> A quiet conscience makes one so serene!
> Christians have burnt each other, quite persuaded
> That all the Apostles would have done as they did![3]

The second stage of the Reformation decided that there was to be no greater religious freedom than before, that there was to be an increase of toleration only as regarded rulers. Men's consciences were still to be dominated by authority; the only change was the transference of

[1] Quoted by Bax, "German Society of the Middle Ages," London, 1894, p. 188; a quotation that I have been unable to locate in Luther's writings, but seemingly genuine.

[2] Luther's ideas regarding persecution were intimately connected with his doctrine concerning the nature of civil government, and we may discover a like progression in his modification of both sorts of teachings. We must also distinguish between his teaching and his practice; for, however zealously he preached obedience to authority, the only prince to whom he ever showed the least deference, or even ordinary respect, was the one to whom he owed his stipend. Beginning with the unqualified declaration that all subjects should obey their rulers, and might not resist them in any case, he had by 1531 been convinced that resistance was in some cases justifiable and advised his fellow Germans to prepare for defense against the Emperor (LDS, 25: 1–51). In 1528 he writes to Link, "I am by no means able to admit that false teachers should be put to death; it is sufficient that they be banished" (De Wette, 3: 348). A year later he has advanced somewhat; men should be constrained to conform to the lawful religion: "Wherever possible, no discordant doctrine should be tolerated under the same authority, in order to prevent further trouble. Though they do not believe, let them for the sake of the ten commandments be driven to the sermon." (De Wette, 3: 498.) Melanchthon, who has long borne a reputation for greater mildness than Luther, outran him in this matter. In 1530 he wrote to Myconius advocating the punishment of Anabaptists as seditious or blasphemous and urges for this course the example of Moses in the law and the conduct of the Emperors who punished Arians with the sword (CR, 2: 17). In 1541 he wrote for the Elector a paper in answer to the question "Whether Anabaptists might be punished by the sword," affirming and elaborating reasons in support of his view. To this Luther appended his approval, *Placet mihi Martino Luthero.* (CR, 4: 737–740.)

[3] Byron, "Don Juan," 1: lxxxiii.

authority. Instead of one Pope, Germany now had three hundred popelets. But, as before, each man must believe and practice what he was commanded—and refusal was still at peril of liberty, goods and life—but he received his commands from the ruler to whom he paid his taxes, not from Rome. Men had striven for freedom, they had risked life and had been ready to shed blood to obtain it, and they had accomplished—what? A change of masters.

Some may think that too much has been made of the words of Luther, that the importance of his sentiments has been exaggerated. But it is quite impossible to overestimate the significance of whatever he said, on this and other subjects. Circumstances had made him the leader, his own genius made him the voice of a great movement. Single sentences may no doubt be culled from his writings that represent nobody but Luther; but any persistent opinion, any determined policy, to which he gave audible or written expression, becomes part of the movement. Sometimes his opinion or policy we find willingly accepted, in other cases he imposed his view on his party by his overmastering personality and imperious will. And after all, as regards religious liberty, the essential thing to be remembered is, not the inconsistencies of Luther and the princes, but the fact that at Speyer in their historic protest, they had emphatically asserted the right of liberty for themselves and the principles on which the rights of others must ultimately rest: the inviolability of conscience and the supremacy of the Scriptures. For that the world owes a debt of gratitude to the signers of the Protest, which it should not neglect to pay because they imperfectly understood their principles and only partially did the work to which they set themselves. Only time was necessary to rectify their error, and in consequence to make their achievement shine the more brightly.

The Protest was not well received by the Diet; the reading of it was barely permitted, and the majority at once declared it to be invalid. The recess was passed despite the Protest, and the Diet adjourned with further innovations in religion prohibited by the law of the Empire, with good prospect that another year would see those already made called in question and an attempt to suppress the Reformation by force. A deputation from the Protestants was sent to the Emperor, to present their cause to him in person,[1] but he refused the messengers a hearing at Piacenza in September, and even kept them prisoners for a time. It was evident that the adherents of reform had only the worst to expect from Charles. Nothing but the occurrence of the long threatened incursion of the Turks gave them a respite and prevented the immediate application of forcible repression. With the largest army that had ever

[1] Walch, 16: 452 *seq.*

been seen on the Danube, Suleiman marched to the walls of Vienna and laid siege to the city. The summer of 1529 was an anxious time for Germany, and indeed for all Europe, for if Vienna fell there was no telling how far the victorious arms of the Turk might be carried. Not since the defeat of Abderrahman and his host on the field of Tours had Western civilization been so menaced, and the nations looked with bated breath at the contest carried on under the walls of Vienna. The city was defended with heroic and even desperate valor, and with such success that, though he suffered defeat in no pitched battle, the Sultan was forced to raise the siege, October 14th, and retire to his own domains, in tacit confession of the failure of his campaign. Never again was the West to be in serious danger from the Turk.

PART III

FROM THE PROTEST TO THE PEACE OF AUGSBURG
1529–1555

CHAPTER I

THE COLLOQUY AT MARBURG AND THE DIVISION OF THE REFORMERS

PHILIP, Landgrave of Hesse, was the ablest political leader that the Reformation developed in Germany. His education was of the slightest, and his moral and religious training had been quite neglected in his youth. His native abilities were only moderate, but his environment tended to develop these nearly to the limit of capacity. From the beginning of his reign he showed not only a desire to increase his authority and influence, but a shrewd appreciation of the means by which this might best be accomplished. His aptitude for public affairs grew with experience, until he became something very like a statesman. On the whole, in spite of a certain restlessness or fickleness of temperament, which sometimes led him into hasty and ill-advised action, he is entitled to the praise of penetration and constancy. Though he was something of a poltroon, his surname of the Magnanimous was not wholly the flattery of courtiers. Those defects of private character, that afterwards became so great a public scandal to the Reformation cause, were little known in these critical years of the struggle, and never greatly affected his conduct as ruler.

Alone among the princes of Germany, Philip had the intelligence to perceive what the exigency of the times clearly demanded, and the initiative to attempt the enterprise. It was as obvious to him then as it is now to us that the only chance of the Protestants to maintain what they had won, to say nothing of extending the reform further, was in their union. If they would stand heartily and loyally together and present an undaunted front to Charles and the Catholic princes, they would be too formidable a party to be attacked, and the Emperor was too shrewd a statesman and captain to attempt force against such a combination. But if they were disunited and at odds among themselves, the Emperor could easily beat them in detail.

As Philip was the only one of his party who did see this clearly, so from the first he bestirred himself actively to unite the reforming States in a defensive league. Even before the first Diet of Speyer, he had induced the Elector of Saxony to meet him, ostensibly on a hunting-party at the lodge of Friedewalde, in the Solinger forest; and here, on November 7, 1525, they settled the preliminaries of an alliance. In the following February they again exchanged pledges of mutual support,

should either be attacked on account of innovations in religion. These informal stipulations were reduced to writing and formally ratified at a meeting at Torgau, May 2, 1526.[1] Not satisfied with this, Philip busied himself with enlisting the coöperation of the other princes who had favored the Lutheran movement, with the result that the princes of Brunswick, Lüneberg, Mecklenburg, Anhalt and Mansfeld joined the league of Torgau June 12th following;[2] the city of Magdeburg gave its assent June 25th;[3] and Margrave George of Brandenburg joined September 29th.[4] It was in great part due to the firm front that the Lutherans were thus enabled to present to their adversaries at the first Diet of Speyer that the tolerant decree of 1526 was enacted.

The lesson was not wholly lost on the princes, stolid and incapable as they were, and the proceedings at the second Diet of Speyer were well adapted to enforce the need of union. Before the ink of their signatures to the Protest was well dried, Landgrave Philip had with little difficulty persuaded them to agree to the formation of a new league for mutual protection. This would enlarge the league of Torgau by the admission of the free cities whose representatives had signed, especially the towns of Nürnberg, Ulm, Strassburg and St. Gall. This agreement was secret and informal, the exact terms of the treaty being left to subsequent determination and ratification. It would have been comparatively easy to extend this league and secure the adhesion of at least the other signatories of the Protest, but for one obstacle that wrecked the whole promising scheme. The name of that obstacle was Martin Luther.

The initiative in the matter of defeating the project was, however, taken by Melanchthon, who at Speyer first manifested that inveterate tendency of his to trim and compromise that so nearly wrecked the Reformation movement at several crises in its progress. He was of opinion that none should have been allowed to sign the Protest but pure Lutherans; that their cause had been seriously compromised by connection with those who had different notions of reform; that, but for such connection, the Romanists would have offered better terms at Speyer; and that, if the connection were completely broken off, better terms were yet obtainable. Melanchthon had not yet reconciled himself to the idea of schism; he was still deluding himself into the belief that reunion with Rome was both desirable and possible. Luther had no such illusions about reunion and was not at all frightened by the bogey of schism, but he was even less tolerant than Melanchthon of any deviation from the

[1] Walch, 16: 439–443.
[2] Walch, 16: 444.
[3] Walch, 16: 445.
[4] Walch, 16: 448.

Wittenberg type of reform, and he lent a willing ear to the complaints that his colleague brought back from Speyer. Melanchthon, if we may take at their full value his assurances to his friends, was very much disturbed in mind—distracted would be hardly too strong a word to describe his mental state. "My conscience is disquieted about it," he writes to one friend; "I have been so much disturbed that in these first days I have been almost dead; all the pains of hell gat hold upon me." [1] To another he writes that the matter had caused him "to neglect all the duties of friendship and all his studies," [2] while to a third he declared, "I would rather die than that our cause should be contaminated by association with the Zwinglians." [3] This from the "mild" Melanchthon!

To communicate such sentiments as these to Luther was applying a spark to tinder—the reformer kindled at once and wrote an earnest letter to the Elector of Saxony, warning him against any such alliance. Such a league, he said, is not of God, nor does it proceed from confidence in God, but from human conceit; it trusts in human help alone and can have no good results; moreover, it is unnecessary, for the Romanists have not the strength or the courage to do anything; besides, it is making a league with the enemies of God and the sacrament, and that is the way of damnation for body and soul.[4] This is one of Luther's most self-illuminating letters, and among other things discloses his complete incapacity for public affairs, united, as is frequently the case, with the complacent conviction that this is really his strong point.

The Elector was probably shaken by this letter, but not yet fully convinced; he had pledged his word to Philip and did not at once see his way to honorable withdrawal. He accordingly took a middle course, the expedient of all weak natures in an emergency, and instead of attending in person the conference at Rodach, at which the formal treaty was to be drawn up, sent his chancellor with stringent instructions not to conclude a final agreement, or give even a provisional assent to an alliance other than defensive, in case any one were attacked "on account of the faith and on account of the things that are dependent on and follow from the articles to be treated in a future council." [5] These instructions were almost verbally embodied in the *Confederations-Notel*, completed June 7th, and signed by the representatives of Saxony, Brandenburg, Hesse, Strassburg, Nürnberg and Ulm.[6] In the meantime

[1] To Camerarius, CR, 1: 1067.
[2] To Justus Jonas, CR, 1075.
[3] To Baumgarten, CR, 1: 1076.
[4] De Wette, 3: 454. Not in Currie. The cleverness with which that collection has avoided the significant letters and included the trivial and worthless amounts almost to genius.
[5] Document first published by von Schubert in ZKG, 29: 3, p. 382.
[6] Walch, 16: 522.

Luther had drawn up and submitted to his colleagues at Wittenberg a more formal opinion against such a league; and, having secured their approval, towards the end of May had forwarded it to the Elector.[1] As before, he states two main objections: first, such a league is trusting in the arm of flesh, not in God; second, any league must unquestionably be founded on the conscience or faith of those who form it. To unite with heretics is to strengthen heresy; the whole nation might in that case suffer, as for the sin of Achan.

The result of Luther's activity in opposition was to induce the Elector to decline to ratify the articles of Rodach. Melanchthon's remonstrances to his friends in Nürnberg seem to have produced a decided coolness in that quarter also. In short, Philip of Hesse soon found himself practically solitary in his advocacy of a policy of political union among the reforming States of the Empire. His real project was larger than this, larger than anything that he had been bold enough to avow: nothing less, indeed, than a union of all the Protestant forces, outside the Empire as well as within. And, in spite of the severe check he had received, he was as yet far from despairing of ultimate success; the need of unity was so urgent, and to him so evident, that he could not understand how any could fail in the end to see it. At any rate, since it was clear to him that union was the indispensable condition of the peaceable progress of reformation, and might easily prove to be vital to the very existence of Protestantism, he continued to agitate for it with great zeal and some intelligence.

Philip's conversion, such as it was, had been due rather to his reading of Luther's German Bible than to the reformer's other works. While he admired the Wittenberg leader, he was not a slavish follower. He developed a keen interest in theological discussion, and, as differences began to develop among the reformers, took a line of his own. On the whole, he showed a decided bent toward the teachings of Zwingli, though no more inclined to unquestioning acceptance of his views than of Luther's. Zwingli's work at Zurich not only had an origin quite independent of Luther's at Wittenberg, but had gone upon strikingly different principles. The Swiss Reformation was based more thoroughly than the German on the study and public exposition of the Scriptures, by which the citizens of Zurich through a series of years had been carefully taught the Gospel and had come fully to appreciate how far the Roman Church had departed from primitive Christianity. The revolt from the Church was begun by the people, not by Zwingli. Luther from the first led and directed the work at Wittenberg; Zwingli for some time followed rather than led the citizens of Zurich.

Switzerland was then the most democratic country in Europe—

[1] Walch, 16: 518; De Wette, 3: 465.

the only country in the sixteenth century with any pretensions to democracy—and it was unavoidable that the Reformation, once begun there, should be radical and thorough. Zwingli avowed as a guiding principle that nothing of the ancient Catholic doctrine and usages was to be retained for which clear authority could not be found in Scripture; and though he was compelled to strain the principle at times, to make it cover the actual policy of reform adopted, on the whole he adhered to it with praiseworthy consistency. Luther, on the other hand, avowed that nothing of the Catholic doctrine and usages should be abandoned, save that which was clearly contrary to Scripture—"what is not against Scripture is for Scripture, and Scripture for it." Principles so fundamentally different could not fail to lead to wide variance in practice, and perhaps this was nowhere so apparent as in the systems of worship established. In the Lutheran churches, many of the crosses, altar pictures and emblems were retained, and are to be seen there to this day; the altar and its candles were practically unchanged; an elaborate liturgy and hymnology were instituted. In the Swiss churches, a clean sweep was made of all "idolatrous" emblems, and the walls were whitewashed; the altars were removed and plain communion tables took their place; the worship was severely simple, with almost no ritual, and the sermon was made the central feature of divine service.

The different political conditions in which the two men found themselves was reflected in their work as reformers. Zwingli was bred in an atmosphere of equal rights and duties, an atmosphere of liberty, of patriotism, exalted to be a part of religion. He was by instinct as much patriot as reformer, as interested in civil affairs as in ecclesiastical, and from early manhood had been accustomed to take personal part in both. The constitution of Zurich also played an important part in his reforms. As Luther felt himself compelled to appeal to the German princes and rely on their power, in order to give practical effect to his teachings, Zwingli was constrained by other conditions to rely upon the town councils and the burgomaster for the practical side of his reforms. A different institutional form of the Swiss work from that found in Germany was the logical consequence, and this could not have been avoided even if there had been complete agreement in principle between Luther and Zwingli. The actual divergence in principle, of course, gave added emphasis to the institutional differences.

The system of visitation by commissions, consistorial control, and the like, gradually worked out in the German principalities, was a logical deduction from the assumption and exercise of episcopal powers by the princes. It was a system admirably adapted to an oligarchy, but intolerable in a democracy. In Zurich therefore the city government as-

sumed the episcopal powers, and was able to exercise direct supervision and control of churches and preachers; consequently there was no need of consistories or commissions. A far more democratic organization of the churches was demanded in Switzerland than would probably have been possible in Germany, where the people had no experience in self-government. The Swiss institutions, originating in a city and adapted to people accustomed to govern themselves, were better fitted for cities generally than a system originating under an oligarchy and assuming as a premise that the congregation were totally unable to manage their own affairs. In consequence, the Zurich system was adopted by many of the towns of Southern Germany, which were near at hand and could observe its working—adopted for its own sake as an ecclesiastical system, quite apart from the doctrines that accompanied it in the city of its origin. But it was wholly natural that the doctrines should go with the institutions, and so more and more these towns were tending to become Zwinglian in theology, as well as Swiss in church organization.

To complicate the situation still further, in 1527 the two leaders had been drawn into a personal controversy, which had continued with ever increasing acrimony. It was perhaps to have been anticipated that sooner or later they should fall out, for they were men of antipathetic natures and irreconcilable aims. Zwingli was much more of a Humanist than Luther, and though both were of peasant birth and started even in the race, Zwingli had acquired much more of the culture and polish and courtesy that we associate to-day with the term "gentleman." Both were born to lead rather than follow, and neither was tolerant of opposition. Luther had the stronger religious nature, and had passed through a deeper religious experience, while Zwingli had the keener and stronger intellect. Zwingli was all but a rationalist, Luther was quite a mystic. On some of the main questions of the Reformation their agreement was not merely formal, but real and thorough: each held firmly to the supremacy of the Scriptures, the right and duty of individual interpretation and the universal priesthood of believers. They both held the theology of Augustine, but Zwingli was inclined to lay chief emphasis on the election of grace as the fundamental doctrine, while Luther declared justification by faith alone to be the article of a standing or falling Church.

The origin of their controversy may be traced to Carlstadt, who in 1524 published a tract in which he condemned his former doctrine of the real presence in the eucharist, and maintained that the bread and wine were mere symbols of Christ's body and blood. The exegesis by which he strove to prove his doctrine was puerile, and Luther had little difficulty in disposing of his argument. Others took the matter up, however,

of whom Zwingli was chief, and though he maintained that he did not derive his idea from Carlstadt, and was perhaps justified in such assertion, the question is of trivial importance: the thing of real consequence is that he agreed with Carlstadt, though he supported his opinion by a different and much better exegesis. Soon after publishing his new view of the eucharist, as already related, Carlstadt found harborage in Basel, whence he continued from the vantage-ground of a university chair, his attacks on Luther's doctrines in writings long since forgotten. It was not unnatural that Luther suspected Zwingli to have been influenced by one whom he had come to look upon as his personal enemy, and the enemy of the Gospel as well. The giving to Carlstadt of succor and even honor was Luther's first grievance against the Swiss, and he never forgave it. The bitterness thus caused may be traced in all his subsequent conduct.

Luther early came to the abandonment of the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation—as soon, in fact, as he came clearly to understand how fully it depended on the philosophy of Aristotle. In rejecting Aristotle as a master, he rejected every trace of the Aristotelian philosophy in theology; and the subtleties that the schoolmen had spun out of the distinction between the "substance" and the "accidents" of matter he utterly scorned. He argued therefore that it was unnecessary to insist that the substance of the bread and wine are changed at consecration into the substance of Christ's body and blood, provided the reality of Christ's corporal presence in the bread and wine was maintained. Thus in 1519 he had written, "No man may fear being guilty of heresy, if he believes that real bread and wine are present on the altar. . . . In the sacrament it is not necessary to the presence of the real body and the real blood that the bread and wine should be transubstantiated, so that Christ may be contained beneath the accidents; but while both bread and wine continue there, it can be said with truth, 'this bread is my body, this wine is my blood,' and conversely." [1]

But Luther accepted as literally true the words "This is my body" and "This is my blood," and resented as sacrilege any attempt to give them other than this literal meaning. It has always seemed to one of feeble intellect that the Lutheran doctrine is more difficult to believe than the Roman, which it replaced. The Roman doctrine merely requires one to believe that a miracle is wrought, and if your faith is sufficiently robust for that, there you are. But the Lutheran doctrine requires one to believe a proposition that is inconceivable by the human mind, viz., that two different substances can occupy the same space at the same time, so that the real Christ who has been exalted at the right

[1] Babylonian Captivity, in Wace and Bucheim, pp. 156, 161.

hand of God is corporally received in and with the bread and wine. Let him who can, believe that even a miracle can accomplish the inconceivable—nobody else need have the slightest objection. Luther got over this difficulty by one of those simple expedients possible only to a great mind: he declared that this was a matter to which spatial ideas and the axioms of mathematics do not apply. But again a feeble intellect cannot follow him. The only bodies of which we have knowledge, the only bread and wine of our experience, occupy a certain definite portion of space and therefore are subject to the laws of mathematics.

Zwingli, on the other hand, understood "This is my body" to mean, This signifies my body: and he adduced many passages of Scripture that must obviously be explained in this sense, such as "I am the vine" and "That rock was Christ." In his view the bread and wine are memorials of Christ's body and blood, not the true substantial body. He did not deny, but rather affirmed, that the true Christ is received by the believer in the sacrament, but a spiritual Christ who is spiritually received through the believer's faith, not through his mouth. And he did not hesitate to show, with unsparing pen, the inconsistencies and absurdities and intellectual impossibilities contained in Luther's doctrine the moment its grounds are examined. It comforts one not a little to find that Zwingli's intellect was also feeble in this particular, and that he was unable to follow the mental processes that Luther fondly persuaded himself were reasoning.

Though Zwingli substantially agreed with Carlstadt concerning the eucharist, he probably derived his view from another source and certainly advocated it on different grounds. But that he agreed with Carlstadt at all was enough to make Luther his enemy. In his first writings on the subject, as even the strong partisans of the Wittenberg leader are constrained to admit, Zwingli treated his opponent with great respect. We cannot say the same of Luther. In his tract, "That the Words of Christ: 'This is my Body' stand fast," [1] he accuses Zwingli of having derived his doctrine from the devil. "How true it is that the devil is a *tausendkünstler*, a myriad-minded trickster. He proves this powerfully in the external rule of this world by bodily lusts, tricks, sins, murder, ruin, etc., but especially, and above all measure, in spiritual and external things that affect God's honor and our conscience. How he can turn and twist and throw all sorts of obstacles in the way, to prevent men from being saved and abiding in the Christian truth." The rest of the tract keeps the promise made by this beginning; it is ill-tempered and abusive, and displays on every page an intimate acquaintance with the devil and his works. Indeed, if one may trust

[1] LDS, 30: 15 *seq.* The subtitle is, "Against the Fanatics" (*Schwärmgeister*).

the evidence of his polemic writings, Luther knew a good deal more about the devil than he did about God; and he certainly manifests more of a Satanic than of a Christian spirit. Much space is devoted in this tract to an idea that thenceforth became characteristic of Lutheran doctrine: the ubiquity of Christ's body. Luther was as little successful in proving the omnipresence of Christ's glorified body as Zwingli on his part was in proving a spatial inclusion of the same body in heaven—both resting their arguments on metaphysical notions regarding a glorified spiritual body of which we know absolutely nothing, and about which therefore all reasoning is a mere beating of the air.

Pamphlets and tracts now flew thick and fast. Bucer and Oekolampadius, Bugenhagen and Melanchthon, took part in the fray. All but Luther retained some semblance of restraint and decency, but he became more furious each time he took pen in hand; "venomous adders," "lies and nonsense," "emissaries of Satan," "heretic," "gross fanatic," "devilish disguise," are a few choice specimens of his vocabulary. As we have seen, there were causes other than theological for this acerbity on his part, and no doubt the most influential was his lately growing sense that Zwingli was becoming a dangerous rival in Germany. Strassburg, Constance, Memmingen, Linden, Ulm, and other towns hardly less populous and influential were fast becoming open adherents of the Swiss leader. So long as Zwingli's influence was confined to Switzerland, Luther had little complaint to make of him, but the moment he began to divide the support of Germany the discovery was quickly made that he was a dangerous heretic and an emissary of the devil. Luther could never tolerate a rival. Then, too, the democratic spirit of Switzerland was distasteful to one who was coming more and more to distrust the common man and to side with the princes as the hope of Germany. In the late uprising of the peasants, the Swiss people had shown too much sympathy with the rebels and had given too little assistance in subduing the revolt, to please either the princes or Luther. The gravitation of the Southern towns toward the Swiss might result in a permanent league with them, to the weakening of the Empire. Luther's genuine love for the fatherland filled him with alarm as he contemplated this possibility, and prejudiced him against the Swiss.

Philip of Hesse was disappointed but not disheartened by the failure of his attempt at Speyer to bring the Protestants together, yet he did not abandon hope of ultimate success. He was more convinced than ever that in such unity was their only rational hope of safety—a fact that Luther must also have seen if he had not been blinded by religious bigotry and personal rancor. After a prolonged correspondence to arrange terms, Philip invited both the German and Swiss leaders

to a conference, with the idea that such a meeting might result in a better understanding and a consequent removal of the obstacles to an alliance. Philip's scheme was so plainly good politics, not to say the only politics, that he failed to comprehend and correctly estimate the personal and theological differences between the two Protestant groups. The theological differences, in particular, appeared to him a mere battle of words; which may have been true, but he had yet to learn how stubborn things words may sometimes be.

The projected conference narrowly escaped failure because of the unwillingness of the Wittenberg leaders to take part in it; they finally consented, more to oblige the Elector of Saxony and Philip than because they expected any good from it. They did not wish to meet Zwingli, and thought if there were to be a conference it would be better to invite only Oekolampadius. Melanchthon even urged that some learned Romanists should be invited, but Philip very properly paid no heed to this absurd suggestion.[1] Zwingli, on the contrary, was eager for the meeting, so much so that he came to it without obtaining formal leave from the Zurich council, who feared for the safety of his person. The Swiss leader was in full sympathy with Philip's plan, and was even more sanguine of success than the Landgrave. The opposition of the Forest Cantons to the reform in Switzerland was pressing him hard, and the urgent need of an alliance between all Protestants was to his mind very plain.

Of all the services of Philip to the cause of reform thus far rendered, none had been of greater worth than the founding of the university of Marburg. This institution, dedicated equally to the progress of learning and the training of a Protestant clergy, opened its doors on July 1, 1527, with 104 students. It seems to have been the Landgrave's first design to have the debate take place under the auspices of the university, but when the time came the meeting was actually held in the Rittersaal, or hall of knights, in the prince's castle. This quaint, rambling old building, perched on a lofty crag overlooking the beautiful and fertile valley of the Lahn, is still occasionally the residence of the German Emperors, and is one of the most interesting pilgrimage places of the Reformation period. The colloquy continued four days, including not only public debates but several private conferences. The main

[1] Luther had this idea also. The temper in which he came to Marburg may be judged from his letter to Brenz, Aug. 29: "Nothing good is likely to ensue from such a hole-and-corner coming together of the churches of God. Therefore I beg of you not to appear, and, if you have not promised to go, remain away. At first we absolutely refused, but as this young Hessian Alexander so worried our princes, we had to promise, but persisted it would result in no good, and only make matters worse. But he stuck to his point, so we yielded. If he would also invite some talented Papists, who could bear witness against these boasters and remarkable saints who are to be there!" Currie, 196; De Wette, 3: 501.

discussions were on Friday and Saturday, October 1 and 2. On the Lutheran side were not only Luther and Melanchthon, but Jonas and Cruciger of Wittenberg, Myconius of Gotha, Osiander of Nürnberg, Agricola of Augsburg, and Brenz of Swabian Hall. Zwingli had as his supporters, besides his closest friend, Oekolampadius, Bucer and Hedio of Strassburg. A number of other invited guests, noblemen and scholars, were auditors—Zwingli says twenty-four, while Brenz speaks vaguely of fifty or sixty. Zwingli desired the debate to take place in Latin, and an official record to be made by a secretary. Luther refused to consent to the latter, and in deference to the guests it was decided to use the German language, as the only one known to many. This placed Zwingli at a disadvantage, as his Swiss dialect could be understood with difficulty.

Luther began the conference with the declaration that he would never change in the least his doctrine of the real presence, and, taking a piece of chalk, wrote on the table in large letters HOC EST CORPUS MEUM, by which he asserted his determination to stand or fall. Throughout he showed himself impervious to reason, determined simply to maintain his own opinion, no matter what might be said. At one stage the Landgrave interposed to rebuke Luther for his violence and quickness to take offense at innocent remarks of Zwingli. Later, when feeling ran high, the prince again interposed and exhorted the disputants to try to come to some understanding. Luther made this characteristic response, "There is only one way to that: Let our adversaries believe as we do." When the Swiss responded, "We cannot," Luther closed the discussion with the words, "Well, then, I abandon you to God's judgment."

On Monday, the Landgrave made a last attempt and brought Luther and Zwingli together in private conference. With tears in his eyes Zwingli approached Luther and held out the hand of brotherhood, but Luther curtly refused to take it, saying, "Yours is a different spirit from ours." [1] How truly he spoke he was not conscious. Zwingli showed the spirit of Christ. But even Melanchthon thought this a strange inconsistency in the Swiss, that he should wish to be accounted a brother

[1] In his letter to Agricola, Luther gives an account that does not tally with that of eye-witnesses: "At the close, they wished that we would acknowledge them as at least brethren, and the prince urged the same, but we could not grant it to them; *nevertheless we gave hands of peace and charity.*" Melanchthon adds a postscript: "See their folly: while they condemn us, they desire notwithstanding to be considered brethren by us." De Wette, 3: 513. Neither Luther nor Melanchthon could understand, what is fully comprehensible by us, that the Zwinglians could differ from the Wittenbergers on a question of exegesis and theology, without ceasing to cherish brotherly love for them. In 1528 Luther had written of Zwingli: "I do not regard Zwingli as a Christian, for he holds and teaches no part of the Christian faith correctly, and has become sevenfold worse than when he was a papist." LDS, 30: 225.

by those from whom he so greatly differed in belief. As one man the Wittenbergers declared, "You do not belong to the communion of the Christian Church; we cannot acknowledge you as brothers; we can only include you in that universal charity which we owe to our enemies." Strange as it may seem, the Swiss were not satisfied with that! [1]

Still the Landgrave urged that something be done toward mutual agreement, loath on his part that the meeting should break up with nothing accomplished. Accordingly, Luther drew up a confession of faith in fifteen articles, in the German language, which with little modification by the others was adopted. These articles [2] have a historic interest, not only because of the occasion that produced them, but as the first formal statement of Protestant belief; and they became the foundation of further confessional documents, as we shall see in due time. Fourteen of the articles were approved without difficulty by all the parties to the colloquy. The fifteenth, on the eucharist, was the occasion of some further discussion, mostly regarding the best verbal expression of the varying views, and was finally adopted in the following form:

> "We all believe, with regard to the Supper of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, that it ought to be celebrated in both kinds, according to the institution of Christ; that the mass is not a work by which a Christian obtains pardon for another man, whether dead or alive; that the sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of the very body and blood of Christ; and that the spiritual manducation of this body and blood is specially necessary to every true Christian. In like manner, as to the use of the sacrament, we are agreed that, like the word, it was ordained of Almighty God, in order that weak consciences might be excited by the Holy Ghost to faith and charity.
>
> "And although we are not at present agreed on the question whether the real body and blood of Christ are corporally present in the bread and wine, yet both parties shall cherish Christian charity for each other, *so far as the conscience of each will permit;* and both parties will earnestly implore Almighty God to strengthen us by his Spirit in the true understanding. Amen."

Luther, a consistent bigot to the last, would not consent to sign the statement until the italicized clause was inserted. And so the conference at Marburg ended with Philip's project of a league of all Protestants more necessary than ever for their preservation, and more than ever hopeless, so long as the princes should follow the counsel of Luther and permit religious bigotry to guide their action, in defiance alike of true Christian principle and of ordinary prudence.

[1] This account of the debate has been based upon the reports drawn up by the participants, collected in CR, 1: 1098 *seq.*, and Zwingli's works, Schuler and Schulteis, 5: 173 *seq.* Walch, 17: 1943 *seq.* gives a rich collection of the Lutheran documents.

[2] For the full text of the Marburg articles, see Walch, 17: 1939; LDS, 65: 88; CR, 26: 121; Jacobs gives them in English, "Concord," 2: 269.

Admirers of Luther, who have been unwilling to see feet of clay on their idol of gold, have nevertheless felt it incumbent on them to offer some apology for his conduct on this occasion. Such attempts have been more amusing than convincing to the world at large. Ranke thus tries to make respectable, and even laudable, what has been described above as disgraceful bigotry—"We must consider that the whole Reformation originated in religious convictions, which admit of no compromise, no condition, no extenuation. The spirit of an exclusive orthodoxy, expressed in rigid formulæ, and denying salvation to its antagonists, now ruled the world. Hence the violent hostility between the two confessions, which in some respects approximated so nearly." How deftly this confuses the issue by its assumption that the hostility was mutual, and was a hostility "between the two confessions," when the facts so clearly witness that the hostility was between persons and was mainly confined to a single party. Dr. Schaff is bolder, but hardly more successful. He says of this conduct of the Lutheran leaders, "Their attitude in this matter was narrow and impolitic, but morally grand." Yes, if it is morally grand to damage one's neighbor at the cost of still greater damage to oneself; if jealousy that has become personal hatred, if insane bigotry, if pig-headed obstinacy are morally grand, we have in this event such a spectacle of moral grandeur as cannot easily be matched in the annals of Europe.

Though the Marburg colloquy had shown union between the Germans and the Swiss to be impracticable, as even Philip of Hesse reluctantly admitted to himself, hope was not yet abandoned of a league between all German Protestants. Before the colloquy, arrangements had been made for a meeting of the interested parties, and the Wittenberg theologians had been commissioned to draw up articles of faith that should serve as a basis of union. The conference at Rodach had been indecisive; a meeting at the convent of Schwabach was expected to be more fruitful. Representatives from Brandenburg and Saxony conferred here with delegates from Strassburg and Ulm, and on October 16th seventeen articles were laid before them.[1] The representatives of the cities declined to sign the articles, on the ground that they held no such commission, and furthermore that this was a new proposal, nothing having been said at Rodach about articles of faith as a pre-

[1] CR, 26: 129–160; Walch, 16: 565 *seq.* These must not be confounded with articles of the same name prepared in June, 1528, for visitation of the churches in Brandenburg (CR, 26: 132). It was supposed until recently that these second Schwabach articles were a revision and enlargement of the fifteen articles adopted at Marburg, which they closely resemble (see Jacobs, "Concord," 2: 27, and Schaff, "Creeds," 1: 228, note 3). Later investigations have, however, made it probable that the Schwabach articles were composed first, and that Luther had a copy of them with him at Marburg and abbreviated them somewhat for submission to those who took part in the colloquy. ZKG, 29: 377 *seq.*

requisite to political action. A further conference was arranged to be held at Schmalkald, and on December 4th a large gathering accordingly occurred; the princes of Saxony, Hesse and Lüneberg attending in person, and the chancellor of Brandenburg representing Margrave George, while delegates also came from ten cities. Though the political situation had grown more threatening than ever, there was no disposition on either side to yield an inch from the positions both had previously taken. The cities with one accord refused to sign the Schwabach articles, Ulm and Strassburg being especially emphatic in repudiating article X, in which it was declared that "there is present in the bread and wine the true body and blood of Christ, according to the meaning of the words, 'This is my body, this is my blood,' and they are not merely bread and wine, as the opposite party now maintains." The utmost efforts of Philip, who urgently warned all present that they had nothing to expect from the Emperor but disfavor and violence, did not avail to obtain the least concession from either side. Both wings of the Protestant movement seemed obstinately determined to be conquered by the Catholics, rather than yield anything to each other.

Before the conference broke up, however, it was resolved to hold another at Nürnberg on January 12th. The gathering was merely formal. None of the princes attended in person, though six of them sent representatives, and but three cities responded, Nürnberg itself being the only important town represented. Of a meeting from which nothing was expected, naturally nothing came. Only a discordant band of disorganized Protestants, looking with sullen suspicion on each other, was left to oppose the strongest prince in Europe, who was now freed from his embarrassments in Italy and Spain, and for the first time since his election as Emperor able to turn his entire attention to Germany. After long hesitation, Charles had decided that Protestantism must be crushed in his Empire.

The details of these conferences have been tedious, and would be altogether unprofitable, were it not for their importance as a key to subsequent events. The failure of these attempts to form a strong Protestant league marks the permanent division of the Reformation movement into two distinct parties, which continued to view each other with mutual distrust and often appeared to hate each other more cordially than they disliked Rome and the Pope. Since the posting of the theses and the beginning of the Reformation itself, we have had no event to consider of so great importance as the Marburg colloquy; if the one was the beginning of the movement, the other was its turning point and finally decisive of its character.

The whole story of this unfortunate division has not been told. Though

religious differences were the ostensible cause, they were in reality hardly more than the occasion, the pretext. Beneath the religious dissensions there were political and economic reasons for disunion, of which men were at the time no more than dimly conscious, if conscious at all. The political interests of the princes and of the towns were as fundamentally unlike as democracy and oligarchy ever are. The economic development of the towns would have been hampered by such an alliance as was proposed, which in any case could only have been temporary between parties of aims so divergent. Nothing but an urgent common danger could have brought together elements so incongruous, and not even such a bond could have held them together for long. As it was, the urgency was not appreciated, and so there was no sufficient motive to union. Had Luther not opposed the league so strongly, doubtless one would have been formed, but nobody is entitled to say that it would have continued or would have proved effective for more than a brief time.

And, in fairness to Luther, it must be added that he had a strong reason, quite convincing to his own mind, against the alliance proposed, or any alliance. He had actually persuaded himself that a Protestant league would lead to bloodshed rather than prevent it; although the avowed purpose of the union was purely defensive, and no party was to be pledged to anything, unless some member were attacked on account of religion. It is possible, of course, that a strong Protestant league might, in some future contingency, have been persuaded to engage in a policy of aggression, but under all the circumstances Luther's idea seems entirely absurd and without foundation. Nevertheless, we must grant him sincerity and consistency in this attitude. He wrote to the Elector of Saxony, under date of November 18th: "For we in our conscience may not sanction or advise such a league, seeing that, when it has continued and possibly bloodshed or at least misfortune results from it, we should gladly be rid of it, but cannot, and must bear an intolerable burden of such a calamity, that we would rather have died ten deaths than have such knowledge that our Gospel had become the occasion of any blood or shame." Christ's cross, he adds, must always be borne; the world will not bear it, but Christians must bear it willingly. We have hitherto awaited the help of God, confident that our cause is his own, and this must still be our confidence.[1] As late as March 6th, when affairs had grown much more threatening, he maintains the same ideas: "Even though his imperial majesty does injustice and violates his faith and oath, he does not thereby annul his imperial authority and forfeit the obedience of his subjects, while

[1] De Wette, 3: 536.

the electors hold him for Emperor and do not depose him." Princes and subjects alike must not resist, even if he breaks all the commandments of God. "Let the Emperor do with his own as he will, so long as he is Emperor."[1] And if it be said by any hasty reader that it was easy for Luther, in the quiet and seclusion of his study, to give such advice to princes, let it be remembered how his own fortunes were involved and that the ruin of the Elector was his ruin.

Nevertheless, making all deductions and allowances that either candor or charity demand, giving Luther the benefit of every doubt, the stubborn fact remains and will not be altered, that, from whatever motives, he was at least the chief occasion, if not the prime cause, of the unfortunate division of the Protestants. Nor is it less a fact that this division, by offering the encouragement to Catholic aggression that weakness ever offers to unscrupulous power, was later to result in deluging Germany with blood and bringing her to the verge of ruin. And in the end, by one of those turns of events that we sometimes term "poetic justice," the very party that scorned alliance with the Protestant Swiss were forced to turn to Catholic France for preservation from total destruction. Though Melanchthon instigated the trouble, and throughout achieved the bad eminence of ably seconding Luther in his divisive policy, the great reformer cannot be acquitted of the guilt of causing the greatest calamity that ever overtook Europe: the longest war, the most bloody, the most destructive to all the interests of civilization, that was ever waged in the name of religion in all the history of mankind. For, if Luther had chosen the contrary course, he would have been able easily to bring Melanchthon and the German princes into line. He, he alone, was the one impassable obstacle to Protestant unity. He must therefore be chiefly held responsible for the ills that resulted from Protestant disunion.

[1] De Wette, 3: 560–563. Luther more than hints his opinion that the electors ought to depose Charles, but in the meantime if he does wrong no single prince or combination of princes ought to offer forcible resistance. Luther was still in bondage to medieval theories of the Empire.

CHAPTER II

THE AUGSBURG DIET AND THE CONFESSION

In November, 1529, Charles V and Clement VII had a memorable interview at Bologna. In this personal conference they accomplished what they had been unable to do through ambassadors: they adjusted all their differences, laid aside their mutual distrust and came to a good understanding with each other. The Pope was finally convinced that the Church had no more loyal son than the Emperor, and that there was no monarch in Europe who had the power to do so much for the Church. On the other hand, Charles felt himself henceforth assured of the Pope's support, not because he now more than formerly trusted one of the Medici, but because this scion of that crafty house had become assured that his own interests demanded the support of the Emperor. The honor of Clement VII could not, his selfishness could, be trusted. There was only one subject on which they were not agreed: the calling of a council. The Pope dreaded the assemblage of such a body, and though he promised to issue a call, he promised with manifest reluctance and it was evident that he was ready to seize upon any pretext to postpone the meeting or to get rid of it altogether. Charles, on the contrary, ardently desired a council, was convinced that one was altogether necessary for the restoration of peace and unity to the Church, and hoped great things from its meeting.[1]

The first fruit of this new accord was the coronation of Charles as Emperor. Hitherto his title had been, in strictness, Emperor-elect—he was not regarded as really Emperor until he had received his imperial crown from the Pope. This, at least, was the theory in Church circles, though it was rapidly weakening in law and in fact. Long before this the Diet had declared at Frankfort (1328) that the imperial dignity was dependent on God alone, and that the choice of an Emperor by the electors did not require papal confirmation for its validity. This action was confirmed at the Diet of Metz (1347), and the question was thenceforth regarded as a settled one in the constitution of the Empire.[2] Emperors were thenceforth so called even in formal documents before coronation, and Charles was the last Emperor to receive the crown from a Pope. This lends special interest to the ceremony of his coronation

[1] Walch, 16: docs. 888 and 889.
[2] Geffcken, Church and State, 2 vols., London, 1877, 1: 255–257.

as the last function of the sort ever held. Another exceptional feature of the occasion gives it a unique interest: it was the only instance in which an Emperor was ever crowned outside of Rome. The visitor to the Eternal City is still shown a large slab of stone, about the middle of the nave of St. Peter's, on which it was customary to place the throne occupied by the greatest monarch of the medieval world when he was formally invested with the imperial dignity.

This coronation occurred February 24, 1530, in the church of San Petronio, Bologna. A wooden awning or bridge, between the adjoining palace and the Church, broke down under the weight of the imperial cortege, but Charles himself had fortunately passed into the Church and escaped injury. Nevertheless, the superstitious saw in the incident an evil omen, presaging the failure of his ambitious projects for the advancement of Empire and Church. After high mass and many religious ceremonies, Charles took a solemn oath that he would "for the future with all his might, mind and strength be a constant protector of the Papal See and Roman Church . . . and maintain and preserve the authority, right and supremacy of the Church, so far as he could." [1] He was then clothed in a richly jeweled robe; the Pope anointed him with holy oil; and placed first the iron crown of Lombardy on his head, and afterwards the crown of Charlemagne. A great assembly of notables were present at the ceremony, but the electors had not been invited, nor consulted regarding the treaties Charles had made with the Pope. They entered a formal protest, on the ground that such neglect was contrary to the constitution of the Empire. But both electors and Emperor were showing to the world, whenever it suited them, that the constitution of the Empire was now about as valuable as an old rag.

Charles was now at liberty to devote his attention to Germany and its affairs. Early in May, 1530, he crossed the Alps, on his way to Augsburg, where the Diet had been previously summoned to meet April 8th. The imperial summons had magnified the danger of invasion by the Turks and expressed the hope that all would unite in the defense of the Empire. As to the religious differences, the Estates were invited to confer with the Emperor and assured that "every man's judgment, view and opinion should be heard, understood and considered, in love and kindness, in order to bring and unite them into a single Christian truth, so as to dispose of everything that had not been rightly explained or treated, on both sides: that a single true religion may be accepted and held by us all, and, as we all live and serve under one Christ, so we may live in one fellowship, Church and unity." [2] These were fair promises and the

[1] Walch, 16: 622.
[2] Walch, 16: 629.

Protestant princes came to the Diet more hopefully than at any time since the Reformation began.

The Emperor was delayed and did not arrive at Augsburg until June 15th. On the following day was the feast of Corpus Christi, and he himself set an edifying example by walking in the procession with uncovered head under the midday sun of a very hot day, holding a burning candle in his hand. The princes showed their metal by absenting themselves from this (as they said) idolatrous ceremony. The Emperor besought them to lay aside their objections "for the glory of God" and accompany the procession, but the princes returned a signed statement, in which they said: "It is recognized by all reasonable, learned and fair-minded Christians that the whole and unmutilated use of the true body and blood of Christ had been ordained and instituted by the Founder himself; and that it was contrary to Christ's commandment to carry about one part of it, namely, the body. It would be gross irreverence, blasphemy and sin to show greater regard for a ceremony introduced by men than for the commandment of God; they had no intention of adding their presence to swell the masquerading parade of Corpus Christi; such godless performances ought rather to be clean abolished from the Church." [1] It speaks much for the Emperor's good sense and self-control that he received with calmness words so needlessly insulting. Nor were the princes more pliant when summoned to a private interview and required to prohibit the evangelical preachers who accompanied them from exercising their office during the Diet. The sturdy Margrave of Brandenburg declared that he would kneel down before the Emperor and have his head struck off, rather than deny God. Charles replied hastily in his low German, "Not head off, dear prince, not head off." The Lutherans remained obdurate even when Charles made the conciliating proposal that the preaching on both sides should be suspended, and that only those of his appointment should deliver sermons, "without touching on questions under dispute"; and throughout the session the princes persisted in holding their evangelical services in private houses where they were lodged.

The Diet was formally opened June 20th, with high mass celebrated by the Archbishop of Mainz, a sermon and an address from the throne. On this occasion the Protestant princes were more complaisant and attended the ceremony; the Elector of Saxony, as Grand Marshal, bore the Emperor's jeweled sword before him. It was sometimes permissible to bow down in the temple of Rimmon! When the Diet assembled in the Rathhaus, his Majesty declared that he was anxious "by fair and gentle means" to end the religious disputes that were causing so

[1] Walch, 16: 680 *seq.* The princes of Saxony, Brandenburg, Lüneberg and Hesse were the signatories.

much division and distraction in Germany, and that the aid of the Estates was invited in the coming campaign against the Turks. He was willing to hear from the Protestants a statement of their beliefs, and the grounds for them, and commanded them to have it ready and submit it to him in writing within four days. Greatly desirous to accomplish something for the peace and unity of Germany, Charles was in a decidedly conciliatory mood. None knew better than he that his predominance in Europe was more apparent than real. He could count with no certainty either on the Pope or on Francis, though both were apparently friendly; the Turk was still a serious menace; he did not have the full and hearty support even of the Catholic Estates. It was certainly wise to try what persuasion might accomplish before resorting to threats and violence. So thought and advised the Pope also.

The Protestant princes believed, or tried to believe, that the Emperor meant what he said, that they were now for the first time to have a fair hearing, the opportunity to make a full statement and defense of their doctrine and reforms. The Emperor's demand for a written document had been early foreseen by the prudent chancellor of the Elector of Saxony, Dr. Gregory Brück, who made the following suggestion: "Inasmuch as the imperial rescript provides that the opinion and view of each one is to be heard, it would be a good thing for us to bring together systematically, in writing, the views maintained by our party, and to fortify them out of the Scriptures, so as to present them in writing, in case the preachers should not be admitted to participate in the transactions. This will facilitate business, and it will serve to remove misunderstanding to have such views and opinions presented." In consequence of this suggestion, the Elector addressed a letter to Luther and his colleagues, March 14th, in which he requested them to prepare "articles both of faith and other church usages and ceremonies" and present them at Torgau. About a fortnight later Melanchthon went to Torgau, presumably taking with him what had been prepared, an apologetic statement since known as the Torgau articles.[1] These were not articles of faith, but rather pertained to "church usages and ceremonies." The Schwabach articles were probably at this time regarded as a sufficient statement of the Lutheran doctrine, and had already been accepted by the Elector as his personal Confession, as well as published in an authorized edition by Luther, who called them those "beautiful, holy, superb articles."[2]

[1] Förstemann, *Urkundenbuch zu der Geschichte des Reichstags zu Augsburg.* 2 vols., Halle, 1883–6, 1: 68 *seq.* English translation in Jacobs, "Concord," 2: 75 *seq.*

[2] There had been a previous unauthorized edition at Coburg, which had been attacked by Conrad Wimpina and others; and Luther accordingly entitled his republication "Martin Luther's Reply to the Howl of Certain Papists." LDS, 24: 337. The "howl" may be found in Walch, 16: 638–648.

After reaching Augsburg, however, the Elector and his advisers felt that neither the Schwabach nor the Torgau articles were exactly adapted to the exigency, and Melanchthon was commissioned to draw up a statement that should more adequately set forth the beliefs of the Protestant party and their objections to certain practices of the Roman Church. The younger reformer had been taken by the Elector to Augsburg for such service as this, while Luther, who ardently desired to go, was commanded not to leave Saxony. The ban of the Empire was still against him, and going to Augsburg would be throwing himself into the lion's jaws. He was therefore compelled to remain at the Elector's castle of Coburg, as near the border as he dared to go, where he maintained a lively correspondence with Melanchthon and others, and carried on his studies. It was better so, though naturally it was hard for Luther to see it, for he was a man of stubborn will and violent temper, fierce in controversy, and would have exasperated his papal antagonists to madness. If diplomacy could accomplish anything toward the reunion of Christendom, Melanchthon was the man to conduct the Lutheran side of the negotiations.

Melanchthon may have begun his work before he parted from Luther at Coburg, but it seems clear that he had made no great progress.[1] On arriving at Augsburg (May 2) he set at work in earnest, and by May 11 had finished his first draft, a copy of which was sent to Luther by the Elector. With it went a letter, in which Melanchthon says: "Our Apology has been sent to you, though it is more properly a Confession. For the Emperor will not have time to hear long discussions. Nevertheless, I have said those things that I thought would be especially profitable and appropriate. With this purpose I have included about all the [Schwabach] articles of faith, because Eck has published the most diabolical slanders against us.[2] Against these I wished to present a remedy. Determine in regard to the whole writing in accordance with your spirit."

[1] What he had done was intended as a preface or exordium to the main document, which was to be the revised articles of Torgau. "I have made the exordium of our Apology somewhat more rhetorical than I had written it at Coburg. In a short time I will bring it, or, if the prince will not permit that, I will send it." Melanchthon to Luther, May 4, CR, 2: 40. This sycophantic address to the Emperor was afterwards dropped and lost sight of, until its discovery in 1905. Richards, "Confessional History of the Lutheran Church," Philadelphia, 1909, pp. 50–53.

[2] The reference is to 404 articles which Eck and the other Ingolstadt theologians had, at the request of the Duke of Bavaria, extracted from the writings of Luther, Melanchthon and others. In these articles, no distinction was made between Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Anabaptists, who were all classed together as godless heretics and disturbers of the peace of the Church. These articles were sent to the Emperor. The Elector of Saxony seems to have heard of this, and sent to Charles at Innsbrück a private confession, based on the Schwabach articles. A copy of this document was obtained from the papal archives and published with an English translation in the *Lutheran Quarterly* for July, 1901, by the late Professor James W. Richard, and reprinted in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1903, p. 345 *seq.*

Luther was conscious that his friend had greater gifts than he for a service of this nature, and did not venture to alter the work. He replied May 15th to the Elector: "I have read over Master Philip's Apology. I know not how to improve or change it, nor would it become me, since I cannot move so softly and gently. Christ our Lord help that it may bring forth much fruit, as we hope and pray."[1] For once in his life, Luther was prudent as well as brave. Had he drawn up the articles, we may be sure they would have been much more aggressive and polemic, and by just so much less suitable to the occasion. He would, for example, have insisted on inserting and retaining *sola* in the article on justification, and in the second part would have made the rejection of purgatory and popery emphatic and unmistakable. Coming from his pen, the articles would have been so many spear-points, and their bristling array would have provoked instant and bitter antagonism from the Catholic party.[2] Melanchthon contrived to present the ideas of the Protestants in a form as little offensive as possible, and yet so to state the main points that there was no misapprehending their meaning.

But though Luther ventured to change nothing, Melanchthon was yet to change much. This copy sent to Luther was only a first rough draft. Three entire articles were added to this: xx, Of faith and good works; xxvii, Of vows, and xxviii, Of ecclesiastical power. In a letter to Luther dated May 22d, he says, "We change many things daily." There were frequent conferences with the other Protestant theologians, and even with some Romanists, each of which resulted in some modification of a phrase here, or the addition of a clause there. Melanchthon also labored unceasingly on the style, to give the last degree of polish to the latinity. With the copy in German less pains were taken; even its text did not in all respects correspond with the Latin.

The first idea of the Elector had been to produce and hand in a Saxon document, and prior to June 8th, there seems to have been no plan of consulting the other princes. Then the Margrave of Brandenburg suggested that if this could be made the Confession of all the Estates that had accepted the Lutheran Reformation, it would have much more weight with the Emperor and the Diet. The suggestion was so obviously wise that it found favor at once, and on June 23d the princes and their counsellors, together with the delegates from Nürnberg and Reutlingen, met for consultation. The Confession was read and discussed. Melanchthon urged that it should be signed by the theologians only, but the

[1] De Wette, 4: 17; Walch, 16: 650–657.

[2] What doubt one might otherwise have on this point is quickly removed by a perusal of the Schmalkald articles, that Luther drew up later for a similar occasion and purpose. At this time also he prepared and published what was virtually his confession, *Vermahnung an die geistlichen Versammelt auf dem Reichstag zu Augsburg*, LDS, 24: 356; Walch, 16: 945 *seq.*

Elector of Saxony, thenceforth known as John the Constant, replied, "I too will confess my Christ." So said they all, and accordingly seven princes and the delegates of the two cities subscribed the Confession: John, Elector of Saxony, and his son, John Frederick; George, Margrave of Brandenburg; Dukes Ernest and Francis, of Lüneberg; Philip, Landgrave of Hesse; and Prince Wolfgang, of Anhalt. It required some courage to do this; none knew what the issue of the matter might be, or how long the Emperor's conciliatory policy might last, and there was more than a fair probability that signing might result in loss of dignities and power.

It was the Emperor's first idea to take up the matter in private, and dispose of it without any scandal, but to this the princes would not consent. They were not ashamed of this thing, that they should do it in a corner, and they insisted that the Confession should be read before the assembled Diet. But to this in turn Charles would by no means consent. A compromise was proposed and accepted: instead of hearing the reading of the Confession in public session in the golden hall of the Rathhaus, a special meeting was appointed for Saturday, June 25th, in a hall or chapel of the episcopal palace, in which the Emperor was lodged. When the appointed time came a large concourse assembled, but as the hall would hold only some two hundred persons, none were admitted save members of the Diet and high notables—the rest were compelled to remain in the hall and court, and even in the street there was a throng. As the day was warm and all the windows open, and the reader spoke in a loud voice, most of them heard quite clearly.[1] Charles wished the Latin copy to be read, as he could understand that better, but the Elector of Saxony interposed: "We are on German soil, and therefore I hope your Majesty will allow the German language." There was reason in what he said, and Charles yielded the point. It was not an unnatural result, perhaps, that his Majesty kept his eyes fast closed during the major portion of the reading—doubtless that he might listen more intently. As if to show that he was quite impartial, however, he did the same a few days later when the Roman theologians had the floor for several hours with their Confutation.[2]

The purpose of the Confession, as we have already seen, is clearly shown by all the circumstances of its composition to have been purely

[1] The Confession was read so loud and plainly, says Spalatin, that through the open windows the people standing in the court and street could hear every word. *Annales*, 134, 135.

[2] This "king business," as Victor Emanuel called it, must be a dreadful bore at times—to have to sit in a big, uncomfortable chair, yclept a "throne," clothed in heavy and hot robes, and listen by the hour to the reading of interminable documents of which one does not comprehend a word, and all the while look dignified and wise—one would rather lecture on Church History than do that!

apologetic. This conclusion is amply supported by the language of the document itself.[1] In the Preface, the Emperor's own words are repeated, with slight verbal alteration, and the attainment of peace, unity and the truth of God is avowed as the object. Failing agreement by mutual discussion at this Diet, the appeal is made as heretofore to a "general, free and Christian council."

The body of the Confession is divided into two parts. The first, based on the Schwabach articles,[2] contains twenty-two articles, of which all but the first three and xvi, xvii, xix, are concerned with the distinctive Lutheran teaching: Justification by faith (iv), the Church (vii), the sacraments (ix, x, xiii), confession (xi), penance (xii), ecclesiastical rites (xv), free will (xviii), good works (xx), worship of saints (xxi). The Lutheran doctrine is stated very carefully, with studied moderation and the obvious aim of minimizing the differences between Lutherans and Papists, but the divergencies cannot be wholly concealed even by the literary deftness of a Melanchthon. The article on justification unmistakably rejects the idea that merit attaches to good works. Other ideas incompatible with Catholic orthodoxy in the articles were: the affirmation of the Real Presence in the eucharist instead of transubstantiation;[3] the denial of the necessity of enumerating all sins in oral confession; silence concerning canonical penance, which was a virtual rejection of it; rejection of the external efficiency of the sacraments, *ex opere operato;* the rejection of a part of the historic rites of the Church, on the ground that they were sinful and burdensome on the conscience.

So numerous were the divergencies of the Lutherans from Catholic orthodoxy, that the Confession was disingenuous in asserting (art. xxii), "This is about the sum of doctrine among us," and on this ground making the claim "that there is nothing which is discrepant with the Scriptures, or with the Catholic Church, or even with the Roman Church, so far as that Church is known from writers" [i.e. the Fathers]. When one considers that the Confession passes by in silence such characteristic

[1] The Confession may be found in German in Walch, 16: 831–875; both German and Latin, critically edited, in CR, 26: 263 *seq.*; Latin text and parallel English translation in Schaff, "Creeds," 3: 4–73; English text only in Jacobs, "Concord," 1: 30–68. Copies in both languages were presented to Charles, but these originals long ago mysteriously disappeared.

[2] Articles i–xi, and xiii–xvii correspond to articles of the Schwabach confession; art. xiv is only implied in xii of Schwabach; articles xii, xviii, xix, xx and xxi are entirely new; while articles xv and xvi of Schwabach do not appear in the Augsburg. All the damnatory clauses of Augsburg are new. Throughout there are expansions, divisions and alterations, so greatly changing some of the Schwabach articles as to make them virtually new. Thus xii of Schwabach becomes vii, viii and xiv of Augsburg; while vii and viii of Schwabach are condensed into v of Augsburg, and ii and iii into iii.

[3] As this had been made an article of faith by the fourth Lateran council, of 1215 (Mansi, 22: 981–2), it is hard to comprehend how the Lutherans reconciled this denial of the doctrine with their claim to be still considered Catholics.

teaching as that of Luther on the priesthood of all believers, on predestination, on the efficacy of indulgences; that it fails to make any deliverance on mooted points like the divine right of the Papacy, indelible orders, seven sacraments or two, and purgatory, the above statement cannot be regarded as truthful.[1] Nor does another immediately following commend itself to the truth-loving mind: that the whole controversy was only concerning "a few abuses," recognized as such by Catholic doctors of the highest standing. The thoroughgoing Protestant is also somewhat disquieted to discover that the Confession does not appeal to the Scriptures alone, but also and frequently to the Fathers. That may have been good tactics, but was hardly honest. But with all omissions and disingenuousness, one fact at least stands out clearly: the cardinal Protestant doctrine of justification by faith is distinctly and even emphatically stated, in both parts of the Confession.

Part II is a revision of the Torgau articles, and at the time was considered the most important part of the document, inasmuch as it was intended to be a justification of the practical religious reforms instituted in the domains of the signers. It consists of the following articles: i, Of both kinds; ii, Of the marriage of priests; iii, Of the mass; iv, Of confession; v, Of meats and traditions; vi, Of monastic vows. This part of the Confession is described by some modern writers as "polemic," and compared with Part I it is fitted to make that impression upon a merely casual reader. But a more careful study discloses its purely apologetic intent. How far Melanchthon stretched the truth in order to conciliate the Catholics may be judged from the opening sentences of article ii: "Our churches are wrongfully accused of having abolished the mass. For the mass is still retained among us, and celebrated with great reverence; yea, and almost all the ceremonies that are in use, saving that with the things sung in Latin we mingle certain things sung in German at various parts of the service." Nevertheless it is admitted that private masses have been "laid aside among us, seeing that for the most part there were no private masses but only for lucre's sake." And it is elaborately argued that masses cannot take away the sins of the quick and the dead, else justification comes by works and not by faith. It will scarcely be maintained by any candid student of the documents that the Confession gives a frank and accurate account of either the doctrine or the practice of the reformers, but rather such a partial and carefully reticent statement as would be likely to arouse least prejudice among Catholics. The damnatory clauses, rejecting

[1] Melanchthon's excuse at the time for these silences of the Confession was that he thought it better to "omit everything that increases the bitterness." Later he said he had "omitted some unnecessary perplexing discussions, that everyone might know what the chief doctrine is in these churches."

the teaching of Zwinglians and Anabaptists, were carefully contrived to emphasize the difference between the Lutherans and these admittedly heretical and sectarian parties.

It is a curious fact, and also a characteristic, that Melanchthon was afraid before the reading that he had yielded too much to his desire to avoid unnecessary offense, and so had made the Confession too mild; but, no sooner had it been read, than he was plunged in the depths of despondency by the fear that he had made it too strong! In fact, if we may trust the accounts of eye and ear witnesses of the occasion, the effect of the reading was marked. Even the Emperor was visibly impressed, probably by the way in which he saw it was received by the Catholic notables, though he may have read the Latin copy that was handed him; and he is reported to have exclaimed, "Would that such doctrine were preached throughout the whole world." Duke William of Bavaria, then the most influential of the Catholic princes, said to the Elector of Saxony, "Heretofore, we have not been so informed of this matter and doctrine." To Dr. Eck, Luther's old antagonist, and the leading Catholic theologian at the Diet, Duke William said, "You have assured us that the Lutherans could easily be refuted. How is it now?" Eck replied, "With the Fathers it can be done, but not with the Scriptures." "Then," retorted the Duke, "I understand that the Lutherans stand on the Scriptures, and we Catholics outside of them." [1]

A confutation of the Confession was, by order of the Emperor, prepared by Eck, assisted by Faber, Cochlæus and others. One of their chief contentions was that certain of the assertions of the Confession were notoriously untrue.[2] For example, that the Lutherans had not abolished the mass, but retained it and celebrated it with utmost reverence. The Catholic theologians had no difficulty in showing from Luther's writings how he had many times rejected the mass and denied its sacrificial efficacy, declaring that there was as much difference between the mass and the true sacrament as between darkness and light, between the devil and God. The claim of the Lutherans that they retained confession was equally opposed to fact; the Catholics proved that for years the Lutherans had not practiced confession, as the Roman Church understood it. But the first draft of the Confutation, though effective in its polemics, was so violent in tone that the Emperor refused to receive it, and returned it to his theologians for revision.

After being several times recommitted and revised, the Confutation was publicly read, in the same place as the Confession and before a

[1] Walch, 16: 1046.

[2] *Acta et Scripta*, p. 208. Cochlæus included in his history some of the rejected matter of the first draft of the Confutation.

similar gathering, August 3d.[1] It seemed to the Lutherans scholastic and puerile, as well as violent, but the Emperor would not permit them to have a copy save under conditions that they refused. He declared, however, that he would abide by the Confutation, and demanded that the Lutherans should yield and accept the teachings of the Church and the authority of the Pope. To this demand, Melanchthon, speaking for his party, said, with as much bravery as Luther had shown at Worms, "We cannot yield, or desert the truth. We pray that for God's sake and Christ's our opponents will grant us that which we cannot surrender with a good conscience." It would have been well for Melanchthon and for the cause that he represented, if he could always have maintained that spirit.

The contemptuous opinions of the Confutation expressed in private by all the Lutherans do not seem justified by the document itself, and perhaps were due in part to the fact that they judged it hastily from hearing it read once. It is concise and clear, moderate in tone and appeals to Scripture (mostly the Old Testament, it is true) quite as often and quite as successfully as the Confession itself. And the Lutherans were not in a position to object to the use made of the Scriptures, because they themselves quoted the Old Testament and the Jewish ritual, whenever it would serve their own purpose. As a statement and defense of the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church, the Confutation is not inferior in clearness, precision and cogency to the Confession; and the uniform maintenance of the contrary opinion by Lutheran writers to this day must be ascribed solely to sectarian prejudice and conceit. In brief it may be said that the Confutation entirely approves articles i, iii, viii, ix, xiii, xiv, xvi, xvii, xviii, and xix of Part I; gives a qualified approval to iv, v, vi, vii, x, xi, xii, and xv, while rejecting certain specified phrases or clauses of these. Only two articles of the first Part are totally rejected: xx and xxi. The whole of Part II is rejected, on the ground that what the Lutherans declare an abuse is not an abuse. The issue between the two parties was thus clearly joined.

But there were other parties represented in the Diet besides Lutherans and Papists, who were compelled to speak for themselves. It is almost incredible that the very moment they were thus standing bravely for what they believed to be God's truth, and pleading for their rights of conscience against the Catholic majority, was the time chosen by Melanchthon and the Lutheran princes for another exhibition of their bigotry and intolerance. It is no pleasure to point out these things, but an honest historian has no option in the matter—he cannot ignore or conceal

[1] The text of the Confutation may be found in German in Walch, 16: 1026 *seq.* English version in Jacobs, "Concord," 2: 209 *seq.*

important facts and remain honest. And this is certainly a fact of importance: four free imperial cities, besides the two that actually signed the Confession, wished to sign but were not permitted. The delegates of Strassburg, Constance, Memmingen and Lindau were excluded from the Lutheran conferences and not allowed to unite with the others in a statement of doctrine. Melanchthon was feverishly anxious to conciliate the Catholics; he held that it had been a great blunder to permit the Zwinglians to sign the Protest at Speyer, and he had no notion of repeating the mistake at Augsburg. Since he remained firm in that position, and the Lutheran princes accepted his advice, the four cities had no recourse but to draw up a separate confession of their own. This Bucer did, with the aid of Capito and Hedio, and a statement in twenty-three articles was hastily composed and presented to the Emperor, which is known as the Tetrapolitan Confession.[1] This document the Emperor did not consider of enough importance to be read publicly, but he was graciously pleased to accept a copy in private, and his Catholic theologians prepared a Confutation of this also, which was read in the Diet October 24th. In this way Charles showed his keen sense of justice and fair play.

The Emperor prohibited the publication of both the Confession and the Confutation, and the latter document was not printed until many years later (1579). All that could be learned of it by Melanchthon, who could not be present at the reading, was from notes made by the Protestants who heard it. By putting these together he learned the main points, and proceeded to prepare an Apology or defense of the Confession. This was offered to the Emperor on September 22d, but Charles refused to receive it, much less to have it read. It must be confessed that he had some grounds for this action; each party had had opportunity to present its views, and to permit a reply by the Lutherans was to obligate himself to hear the Catholics again, and so on *ad infinitum*. When the Emperor promised that every man's opinion should be heard in love and kindness, he cannot be held to have committed himself to the permission of an interminable controversy. But in spite of the Emperor's attempt thus to confine the disputes within limits, and in defiance of his prohibition of publication, no fewer than six unauthorized editions of the Confession appeared within a few weeks. Inasmuch as all the harm possible had now been done, and deeming it better that a correct text should supersede these copies that contradicted at many points both the original text and each other, Melanchthon on his return to Wittenberg caused an edition to be printed, copies of which reached

[1] Text in German in Niemeyer, pp. 740–770; Förstemann prints both Latin and German texts, 2: 21 *seq.*; English text in Jacobs, "Concord," 2: 180 *seq.*

Augsburg before the final adjournment of the Diet. In the following April (1531), both the Confession and the Apology were published at Wittenberg, a copy of which, dedicated to Luther in Melanchthon's own hand, is now preserved in the royal library at Dresden.

Charles did not cease to hope and labor for union. We have already noted his political and military embarrassments, as well as his ambitious projects; he really stood in need of a generous subsidy of men and money from this Diet, for his campaign against the Turks, and this could only be obtained, it appeared, if the religious controversy could be brought to some sort of peaceable settlement. Deeper than this was the real cause of the hesitation of Charles to employ force: he could not depend on his Catholic nobles to support him in a religious war. Princes like George of Saxony and William of Bavaria, especially the latter, were quite as jealous of the Habsburgs as they were angry at the Lutherans; and they had a well-founded suspicion that the chief result of a war of religion would be to increase the prerogatives and power of the Emperor at the expense of the princely oligarchy. Restoration of unity to the Church was uncertain and in any case would be quite incidental. However much they desired the latter, they were resolved to do nothing to promote the former. This jealousy paralyzed both Church and Empire at this critical moment.

Charles and his Catholic supporters were therefore a unit in proposing a conference, in which the difficulties in the way of union might possibly be overcome. On August 16th representative theologians of both sides began to debate the points in dispute, taking the Confession as a basis. The larger body was afterwards reduced to a smaller. For the Catholics Eck, Wimpina and Cochlæus now showed themselves as reasonable and conciliatory as Melanchthon, Brenz and Schnepff for the Protestants. On the doctrinal articles, Part I of the Confession, mutual concessions were made, one after another, until only on three points was there irreconcilable disagreement: first, how far good works are meritorious; second, on the necessity of canonical penances to the full forgiveness of sins; third, on the invocation of saints, which the Protestants persisted in holding "a doubtful and dangerous thing," not commanded by the Scriptures and leading to great and perilous abuses. It was generally admitted by the Catholic theologians that considerable latitude on such points had always been tolerated in the Church. Cardinal Campeggio, the papal legate, was inclined to regard the doctrinal differences as only a dispute about words. Nevertheless, the net result of these debates was that the Lutherans had practically surrendered their doctrine on justification and the eucharist, for the sake of unity.

With regard to Part II of the Confession, concerning the abuses in

the Church, and the practical reforms instituted by the princes, the difficulties proved to be both more numerous and more serious. Even here, however, the Catholics were ready to admit that there had been great abuses and corresponding need of reform. The Protestants, on their part, were ready to concede that they might have gone too fast and too far, and that much of the old order might be restored. The theologians on the Lutheran side were willing to concede the restoration of the episcopate, fasts and festivals; but they demanded the eucharist in both kinds, and the marriage of priests, and refused to reëstablish private masses. The Catholics consented to recognize the marriages already contracted, but insisted that none should be tolerated for the future. They demanded restoration of the cloisters; the Protestants refused this, but were willing not to interfere with what remained. On several of these points, the most important of all, the differences were found to be irreconcilable.

What threatened to be a fatal blow to the Protestant cause was a private negotiation with Campeggio begun by Melanchthon. On July 6th he wrote a letter in which he said: "We have no doctrine that divides us from the Roman Church, and are ready to obey it, if it will leave free course to pure doctrine. We honor the Roman Church and the whole government of the Church; if the Pope only would not condemn us, unification might easily be accomplished. The whole trouble is about an insignificant departure from custom. The rules of the Church are not opposed to prevailing unity in the Church, along with diversity in such things." [1] On the following day he wrote: "Provided a few things are condoned or dissimulated, peace can be concluded, to wit, if to us both kinds are permitted in the Lord's Supper and the marriage of priests and monks is tolerated." It is not wonderful that the Nürnbergers, becoming aware of this, declared that Melanchthon was acting childishly and added indignantly: "At this Diet there is no man who until now has caused the Gospel more shame than Philip." [2]

It is hardly possible altogether to excuse Melanchthon's pusillanimous and vacillating conduct, but a little consideration of certain facts tends somewhat to palliate his error. He had come to Augsburg full of the idea that a compromise with the Romanists was possible, if the Lutherans held aloof from the Zwinglians. Then, as later, he was personally indifferent to the ceremonial side of religion, if only liberty to preach the Gospel was secured. He believed sincerely that the Catholic wrath against the Lutherans was mainly due to the innovations the latter had made in the ancient rites of the Church, and he was ready to undo much of what had been accomplished, for the sake of peace. He thought

[1] CR, 2: 169 *seq.* Cf. letter of August 4, CR, 2: 246.
[2] Quoted by Gieseler, 5: 147, note. Baumgartner's letter in full, under date of September 13, in Walch, 16: 1782.

it possible for the Catholics to concede two points of discipline, which had never been matters of faith: communion in both kinds and the marriage of priests. With these concessions he was personally content, and, these granted, he was ready to see all things made as they were before the Theses. But in return for this he would insist that liberty to teach pure doctrine according to the Scriptures should be conceded by the Church.

Luther did not agree with those who thought Melanchthon a traitor. Why should he? He had himself said almost identical things more than once. He had written to his prince: "It is dangerous to disturb the old order if there are no significant and important causes for it, and even if the Pope were an Antichrist we could live under him, even as the Israelites under Pharaoh, if he would only not oppose the pure doctrine of God and the use of the Holy Scriptures." And with his own hand he appended to Melanchthon's treatise on the power of the Pope: "If the Pope would allow this, we Lutherans would defend his doctrines and privileges better and stronger than the Emperor and the whole world; for we would do, without the aid of the sword, by the Word and power of God, what the Emperor with the fist, without the Word and power of God, cannot do." [1] He now on the one hand defended Melanchthon from unjust accusations, while at the same time he tried to breathe into that timid and irresolute soul something of his own trust and courage.

Luther, in fact, never showed to better advantage than during these trying days of seclusion and uncertainty at Coburg. He was at his best in times of storm and stress, when his native courage and his trust in God made him cheerful though others could see no ray of hope.[2] It was at this time, according to his contemporaries, that he composed the battle-hymn of the Reformation, *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*— the words certainly are his, perhaps the music also. And though later researches have thrown doubt on the accuracy of these statements, and point to its composition several years earlier, it must be granted that there is a singular coincidence between this Marseillaise of the Reformation, as Heine called it, and the letters written by Luther from Coburg. In one respect this is his greatest contribution to the cause of the Reformation; it was and is a trumpet-call to faith and courage and endurance. Small wonder that the troops of Gustavus Adolphus

[1] CR, 2: 318.

[2] Among Luther's troubles at Coburg was the death of his father. A companion wrote to Catherine Luther: "When he read Reinecke's letter he said to me, 'My father is dead.' And then he took his Psalter and went to his room and wept so much that for two days he could not work. Since then he has not given way to his grief any more." Letter of Veit Dietrich, June 19th. Cf. Luther's letter to Melanchthon, of June 5th, De Wette, 4: 32.

went into action singing this hymn; but a better title to our admiring remembrance of it is the nobler service it has done in many a spiritual conflict, inspiring the followers of Christ to victory on fields the more glorious because they were bloodless.

The wily papal legate pretended for a time to fall in with Melanchthon's ideas, but soon threw off the mask, and again insisted on the old terms of Rome, "Submit, recant." The conferences, public and private, came to nothing and the Saxon theologian ate all his humble pie in vain. To one who reads the account of these tedious and fruitless negotiations, in which so much was at stake on both sides, the inquiry naturally suggests itself, Why, after all, did they fail? The success of the Emperor's policy of pacification, on which he had set his heart and in a manner staked his future, demanded a favorable result. All parties had, seemingly, more to gain from unity than from disunion. The answer appears to be that not one thing merely, but several things, prevented a compromise.

In the first place, Luther was unalterably opposed to it. Even had Melanchthon succeeded in arranging definite terms, it would have been at the cost of concessions to which the real leader of the movement would never have given his consent.[1] Though in retirement, and much of the time kept in ignorance of what was going on, Luther was the one factor in the problem that could not possibly be ignored. And although he defended his friend against accusers, he was far from approving all that his colleague had done, and he had no idea of yielding as much as had been proposed. When the memorandum of tentative agreement reached by the theologians was submitted to him, by direction of the Elector, he returned a series of severe criticisms upon it.[2] He wrote to Jonas, September 20th: "If we yield to a single one of their conditions . . . we deny our whole doctrine and confirm theirs. . . . I would not yield an inch to these proud men, seeing how they play upon our weakness. . . . I am almost bursting with anger and indignation. Pray break off all transactions at once and return hither. They have our Confession and they have the Gospel. If they wish let them hear those witnesses; if not, let them depart to their own place. If war follows it will follow; we have prayed and done enough." [3]

There are two other good reasons why the negotiations were foredoomed to failure: the Pope and the princes. To these attempted agreements and compromises the Pope was not a party, and he would have

[1] On August 26th, Luther wrote his ultimatum to Justus Jonas, whose firmness he could trust better than Melanchthon's: "Contend manfully and yield nothing to our adversaries, unless they prove it by evident Scripture." De Wette, 4: 148.
[2] Walch, 16: 1407, dated August 26th.
[3] De Wette, 4: 169.

been in no way bound by them had they been brought to a successful issue. The result would have been a restoration of papal and episcopal power in Germany, with no guarantee that the powers would not be as much abused in the future as in the past, and with every probability that they would be. This the Protestants were not so blind as not to see. Not only so, the Pope was determined to keep a free hand. Campeggio reported to the Curia during the negotiations that the five chief demands of the Protestants were: the Lord's Supper in both kinds; the marriage of the clergy; the omission of the canon in the mass; *the retaining of the confiscated Church property;* and the calling of a council. In a consistory held July 6th, it was decided to yield nothing.[1]

Melanchthon's letters will be searched in vain for any mention of the demand italicized above, yet it was the *crux* of the whole situation. We may assume, with no great danger of error, that the princes would have consented to almost any statement of doctrine that their theologians might have agreed upon with the Catholics, and would have interposed no obstinate objection to any concessions similarly made regarding the rites of the Church. One cannot believe that they would have stood out even for communion in both kinds, against the advice of their theologians. But to part with the episcopal jurisdiction they had assumed and for some years exercised was another question; they would have opposed this strenuously, and it is doubtful if they could have been persuaded to yield it. And there is no doubt whatever that it would have been quite impossible to persuade them to restore the confiscated Church property—nothing but force would have been able to accomplish that. What a German prince once got, he kept until it was taken from him. Here, if nowhere else, negotiations for peace were certain to be wrecked, for the Catholic party had not yet resigned itself to the loss of these great possessions.

How shameful a scandal the rapacity and greed of the princes had been, we gather from the contemporary documents, which most Protestant historians have ignored. The spiritual princes complained to the Diet in terms like these: "The adherents of the new doctrines have demolished a vast number of churches and edifices of divine worship, and have employed altars, gravestones and other sacred monuments in the fortification of their castles and town walls; they have suppressed pious foundations, anniversaries and other religious provisions, and confiscated the revenues; monstrances, chalices, sacred vestments, reliquaries and other articles of worship they have sold by public auction; they have mutilated and burnt images and crucifixes. . . . They subject all the hospitals and other such ecclesiastical institutions to their secular control and administra-

[1] Pallavicini, *Hist. Concil. Trid.*, iii: 4, 3.

tion."[1] But a few months preceding the Diet, Margrave George of Brandenburg, a bright and shining light among the reformers, had despoiled all the churches and cloisters in his domains of all their vessels of gold and silver and sold them, using 50,000 florins of the proceeds to pay the gambling debts and other liabilities of his deceased brother, Casimir. Luther wrote to Spalatin that the plunder of the Saxon monasteries tore his heart,[2] and Melanchthon complained that "many who wish to be thought quite evangelical pounce upon the property consecrated to the support of the pastors, preachers, schools, churches, so that in the end we shall become heathen."[3]

Even more determined was the opposition of the cities to the proposed restoration of episcopal power. Melanchthon, who was in a position to know, attributes to this the failure of the negotiations at this point. He himself had strenuously urged the restoration of episcopal authority as the only practical way to heal the schism, and as necessary to prevent all sorts of disorder. Moreover, it was necessary in order to protect the clergy from the tyranny of officials of court and state.[4] "You can have no notion," he writes to Luther, "how much odium I have incurred from the Nürnbergers, and from I know not how many others, on account of the jurisdiction conceded to the bishops. It is not for the Gospel that our colleagues are contending, but for power and dominion. These people, having grown wonted to liberty, and having shaken off the episcopal yoke, are unwilling to have the old yoke put on again. The imperial cities are especially bitter in their opposition to episcopal rule. They do not care a fig for religion; their only concern is to be freed from the control of the bishops."[5] Once in a while Melanchthon forgot himself and told the plain, unadulterated truth, as he saw it. The Nürnberg senate objected to the proposed restoration of the bishops on these grounds: "Should this article be established, then no more subtle and direct way of utterly wiping out the Gospel in a short time could be thought of. For if, as heretofore, the bishops should have full power over the priests; if the bishops, by virtue of their episcopal authority, are to be able, unhindered, to punish delinquent priests; if the pastors and priests are to be presented to the bishops, as this article

[1] Quoted by Janssen, 5: 274 *seq.*

[2] De Wette, 3: 147.

[3] *Unterricht Melanchthons wider die Lehre der Wiedertäuffer*, Wittenberg, 1528.

[4] "How could we dare take away the power of the bishops, if they only allowed free course to pure doctrine? To express plainly what I think of this, I say that I would not confirm the episcopal power, but establish a new episcopal control, as I see what kind of a Church we shall have if their administration is abolished." Melanchthon to Camerarius, CR, 2: 334; and cf. 259, 362, 622, 628, 964.

[5] CR, 2: 326, 328. Aleander wrote in similar vein to the Curia from Regensburg, March 14, 1532: "The plebeians in the Catholic cities look with envy on the power that the plebeians in the heretical free cities have acquired, so that they too are bitter with the spirit of insurrection." Quoted by Janssen, 5: 393.

unqualifiedly proposes, without any limitation of the episcopal power, what else will follow, or what is to be expected, except that the bishops will never permit a truly Christian pastor to be presented?" [1] This was by no means the only case in which the sturdy firmness of the cities saved the Reformation from failure.

It must be acknowledged that Campeggio was one of the barriers to peaceful compromise. In his confidential letters to the Curia, he urges repeatedly that force is the sole remedy for the troubles in Germany. To negotiate with the Protestants is only to waste time and help them become stronger. The one thing to do, is for the Emperor to cut the proceedings short and compel the princes to submit. That there might be certain difficulties in this course seems never to have occurred to the papal legate, but it certainly occurred to Charles, who kept his temper wonderfully through these scenes, pressed as he was by unreasonable demands from several quarters. But there was something at stake that both parties kept carefully out of sight and never so much as mentioned: the whole controversy between Protestants and Catholics, stripped of its irrelevant details, was a question of the infallibility of the Church, and its divinely instituted function of saving men through a priesthood and sacraments. The Catholics could surrender anything but this, and by accepting it the Protestants surrendered everything. Compromise and reunion were impossible words.

Recognizing this fact at last, the majority of the Diet proposed a recess providing that the Protestants should be allowed fifteen days to consider whether they would submit, and threatening forcible measures in case of their continued contumacy.[2] The princes and fourteen cities prepared and signed a second Protest[3] against this action—even Augsburg refused the recess. On the following day the Elector and Melanchthon left Augsburg, and a few days later Melanchthon was at home in Wittenberg. Charles is said to have remarked reproachfully, as he bade the Elector adieu, "Uncle, uncle, I did not expect this from you." He then had reason to fear that the religious dissension would prevent any subsidy against the Turks, as the Protestant princes might be expected to hold aloof.

The Protestant princes generally followed this example, if they had not anticipated it,[4] and Charles was left with the Catholic members to

[1] Quoted by Richards, p. 176.
[2] For the first recess, see Walch, 16: 1531. It is dated September 22d
[3] Walch, 16: 1534, 1546, 1562.
[4] Philip of Hesse had secretly left more than a month before (August 6th), and there had ever since been disquieting rumors that he had concluded an alliance with the Swiss (which was true) and was raising an army against the Emperor and the Catholics (which was quite untrue). These rumors may have had something to do with the conciliatory attitude of the Catholics during August, until time had reassured them.

complete the business of the Diet. A revised form of the recess was prepared, adopted, and proclaimed under date of November 19th. It repeats with little change what the Emperor had said in his summons of his desire to hear all parties, in order to restore peace and unity to the Church and Empire, and recites the proceedings of the Diet. It recalls the preliminary recess, and the fact that the Protestants had been granted fifteen days for consideration, but had refused obedience. Accordingly, the time has been extended to April 15th, after which, if they do not submit, they will be dealt with according to the law of the Empire. The Emperor has entered into a compact with his loyal Estates "to stand by the true and ancient faith and to protect the same." The errors of the Protestants were then enumerated, and it was decreed: Only such preachers were to be admitted thenceforth to pulpits as were approved by the bishops for doctrine, character and ability; all married priests were to be suspended until they had put away their wives and received absolution; strict supervision was to be exercised over printers and publishers, and nothing must be published without proper sanction; all bishoprics, cloisters and churches that had been confiscated and plundered were to be restored, and all clerics, monks and nuns were to be restored to their possessions, while those yet unmolested were not to be disturbed, under penalty of the ban; the Emperor would arrange with the Pope that a general council should be called within six months after the close of the Diet, which should be held within a year at longest from the summons; and finally, "that no one, whether he belong to the lay or to the clerical order, shall do violence to another, or oppress him, or make war upon him, on account of his religious beliefs; nor deprive him of his lawful rents, fines, tithes or other possessions." Failure to comply with these provisions was made punishable under the terms of the Worms *Landfriede;* and any person violating them might be proceeded against in the imperial Fiscal Court.[1]

This was a shrewd blow at the Reformation. As the Romanists themselves put it pithily, they had decided *nicht fechten, sondern rechten*—not to fight but to sue their antagonists. No more aggressive proceeding against the Protestants could have been devised. The great wealth of the Church had led the princes and cities to plunder it right and left. Out of the enormous wealth thus seized, a poor and inadequate provision was made for the support of the parish clergy and the parish schools, but in so niggardly a fashion that often Luther and the other reformers were moved to righteous anger. All the circumstances urge us to the conclusion that it was this great opportunity for self-enrichment, and not any real zeal for evangelical truth, that led most of the

[1] This second recess is in Walch, 16: 1596.

princes to join the Lutheran movement. The free cities were equally susceptible to the same temptation; the secularization of the church property relieved the citizens of the greater part of the burden of taxation for some years, and enabled them to carry on notable public improvements at little or no expense to themselves. No wonder the Reformation was popular in the towns, when men thus found a way to save their souls and their pockets at the same time.

And now they were not only threatened that they must give up their new faith, but also restore this wealth unlawfully gotten. The former they might have borne; the latter was not to be considered—greed more than creed urged them to stand fast for the Reformation and fight to maintain what they had won. A sordid and unworthy element, before existing but unrecognized, from this time forth becomes visibly mingled with religious conviction in the history of the Reformation. A more worthy motive for retaining the confiscated property may also be discerned: there was no way to maintain the newly organized Lutheran churches, except out of the revenues of the formerly Catholic property, which the princes and towns were now administering by virtue of the episcopal power that Luther had taught them to assume. If the scheme unfolded in the Augsburg recess should be pressed to its full capability, the Reformation would be undone—the princes and towns could be harassed by such a multiplicity of legal proceedings and judgments and costs as would be more than equivalent to a war against them. And if they refused obedience to the decrees of the imperial court, the Emperor would have good legal ground of proceeding against them as rebels and open violators of law. And even if they escaped this, with the confiscated property gone they would be unable to support the new churches from their own purse, while the people would never submit to the additional taxation that would be required for their support.

It was a plan as efficient as it was simple for the defeat of the Reformation, and no small part of its strength lay in its apparent justice. The ancient Church was saying: "You may turn your backs on the faith of your fathers, if you will, and introduce new doctrines and rites; but you shall not plunder the old Church to do it. If you wish a new religion, pay the bill. Do not steal for your new faith." The Emperor had placed himself in an impregnable legal position, and at the same time placed the Protestants in a position quite indefensible, revolutionary in fact. This was the sum of his accomplishment at Augsburg. In every other aspect of the case, he must be reckoned to have met with defeat. It was the first serious check in a hitherto glorious reign, that had been marked by a series of successes, which together had placed him in fact, as he was in rank, at the head of European rulers.

But though Charles accomplished so little toward his favorite project of pacifying the Empire, he was more fortunate regarding another plan that lay hardly less close to his heart. His brother Ferdinand's attendance at the Diet has already been noted; the object of this was to secure his ultimate succession to the imperial dignity and his immediate election as King of the Germans. He could then, in the absence of Charles, be an executive of dignity and authority who would make the imperial government more efficient. Charles obtained, by promises or bribes, the assent of all the Electors save the Prince of Saxony, who not only withheld his vote but refused to attend the meeting of the electoral college. On account of the plague at Frankfort, the election took place at Cologne, January 5, 1531, and was followed by the coronation of Ferdinand at Aachen six days later. Luther advised his prince to attend the election, and even to assent to the election of Ferdinand, as a choice of evils, fearing that war might follow the prince's refusal; but the Elector persisted and sent by his son, John Frederick, a formal protest against the choice of Ferdinand. The customary pledges were exchanged between the new king and the electoral princes, and the latter in particular agreed to stand by each other loyally.

The Protestants now began for the first time to show some glimmerings of political reason. They had lost the first and best opportunity to provide for their security, but there was still a chance for them by uniting to make successful resistance to the Emperor and his new scheme of legal persecution. Little more than a month after the publication of the Augsburg recess the Protestant princes and delegates of towns met at the convent of Schmalkald on the Southwest frontier of electoral Saxony (Dec. 22–31). Here they spent the season devoted throughout Christendom to celebrating the birth of the Prince of Peace in devising plans for war. Some of them had conscientious scruples about bearing arms against the Emperor, even in self-defense, but they had still greater objections to disgorging their confiscated wealth. A tentative league was concluded at this time, in which the Elector of Saxony, the Duke of Lüneberg, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Prince of Anhalt and two Counts of Mansfeld, and the delegates of Magdeburg and Bremen agreed: "As soon as any one of them should be attacked for the Gospel's sake, *or on account of any matter resulting from adherence to the Gospel*, all of them would at once proceed to the rescue of the attacked party, and aid him to the utmost of their ability." Other clauses of the treaty, and all the attendant circumstances, combine to prove that the chief impelling cause of the formation of the league was the property question. The princes now fairly threw off the mask and plainly avowed that the "Gospel" meant the right to confiscate Catholic property, that self-aggrandizement

was what they meant by "religion," and that they would proceed to any extremity rather than surrender what they had appropriated from the wealth of the Catholic Church. They distinctly pledged themselves to protect one another not merely against war and invasion, but against continual harassment by means of lawsuits in the imperial court.[1] Two other ineffectual meetings were held before a final and effective treaty was concluded and signed, March 28th. Ostensibly formed to defend the Protestants from attack on account of their religion, the league was in reality an attempt of the princes and free cities to resist imperial authority and maintain the system of princely oligarchy and municipal independence that now constituted the "Empire." They had the powerful, though secret, encouragement of Catholic France, and possibly of the Sultan, both of whom were delighted to see Germany remain rent by dissension. A united Germany would have meant a death blow to the ambitions of Francis.

During the summer the organization was completed; the princes of Saxony and Hesse were appointed chiefs of the league. All of the princes, and most of the cities, that had received the Reformation soon gave their adhesion. North Germany was practically a unit in its support, and the more important towns of South Germany became members. The strength of this confederacy placed it on an equality with the Powers of Europe, and several nations contemplated or offered alliances. Had the Zwinglians been admitted it would have been invincible, and no European ruler would have dreamed of attacking it, least of all one so astute as Charles V. And any temptation that the Emperor might otherwise have felt to measure strength with it was soon removed by events. Before the date set for the enforcement of the Augsburg recess had arrived, the Turks were again menacing the Empire, and its whole military power was required to repel the invasion. To the surprise and gratification of the Emperor, the Protestant princes were in this crisis actuated by patriotism rather than by religious rancor; and they responded to the call for help by putting a large and well equipped body of troops in the field. The Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse were especially active, and the services of the latter in the field were so eminent as to win the lively gratitude of the Emperor and the assurance from him that he would not proceed to extremities against the Protestants.

Charles had other motives than gratitude for this action. Francis I was biding his time to seek revenge for the humiliation of Pavia, and had

[1] Walch, 16: 1766 *seq.* On the Protestant intrigues preceding the formation of the League, consult Armstrong's "Charles V," 2: 125–130. The documents show plainly that resistance to the imperial policy of prosecution in the Fiscal Court was the impelling motive to the formation of this league.

shown himself far from averse to aiding the Protestants, should they come to blows with the Emperor. Henry VIII, of England, was also hostile to Charles, because the latter had defeated his divorce project, and would probably have made an alliance with the Schmalkald League if its leaders had then favored a foreign alliance. As yet they were not ready for so revolutionary a measure; they would defend themselves, but they would not unnecessarily violate the imperial constitution. The hope of Charles to strengthen his position in Germany by the election of his brother Ferdinand had been disappointed. Aleander, then again papal legate, wrote bitterly to Rome in March, 1532, that the devil had "filled the hearts of the ducal brothers, William and Louis of Bavaria, with envy and dislike of Ferdinand, although both of them have been good Catholics up till now." Though they themselves might not become Protestants, he thought they might not oppose their subjects if the latter should wish to change their religion.

At the Diet of Regensburg, in 1532, the Emperor was not less anxious for peace and unity than he had been two years before at Augsburg, and was much more ready to make concessions. Negotiations had been begun with the Elector of Saxony and conducted in his behalf at Nürnberg by the Archbishop of Mainz, which were at length brought to a successful conclusion. The intervention of Luther, who was also anxious to see peace established, led the Elector to moderate his first demands, and in particular to assent to a limitation of the treaty to "the present adherents of the Confession of Augsburg." It was agreed that, until the meeting of the general council, the *Landfriede* should be observed by all the Estates, so that none should molest or do violence to another, on account of the faith or any other reason. The Emperor should use all diligence to have the call for the council issued within six months, the body to meet within a year thereafter; and failing that, he should summon the Estates to consult with him what further should be done. All suits begun or likely to be begun by the imperial Fisc against the Elector of Saxony or other princes to be in the meantime suspended—thus securing them for the present in the possession of all confiscated property. These terms were acceptable to the princes, and pleased the towns also, but the Catholic members of the Diet refused to accept the recess in which the terms of the treaty were embodied. The Protestants thereupon declared that they were quite willing to accept the Emperor's personal pledge, and the so-called Peace of Nürnberg,[1] concluded by Charles, August 2, became practically operative not as an imperial statute but on the basis of a private understanding. As such it assured the peace of Germany for a period of over ten years, another opportunity of untroubled develop-

[1] The document is in Walch, 16: 1835 *seq.*

ment for the Reformation, like that which followed the Speyer decree of 1526.

The policy of Charles had failed, for the time at least, but he did not correctly estimate the seriousness of the check he had received. One of his favorite sayings was, "I and time against any two in Europe," but in this case time was against, not with him. Not for centuries had Germany witnessed so brilliant a gathering as assembled at Augsburg, and not since the Reformation began had the opportunity to suppress it been so favorable. When Charles came to Worms for his first Diet he was an untried boy; he had since then measured himself against the greatest in Europe and had proved himself their superior. The most powerful king and the strongest combination of Italian powers under the Pope had in turn yielded to his victorious arms. Flushed with victory, he came to Germany fully determined to be conciliatory and politic indeed, but to make the imperial dignity something more than a mere name and to restore unity to the Church. He saw in Protestantism, what it really was, a political opposition to imperialism, as well as a religious opposition to the Church, and therefore the chief obstacle to his imperial aims and hopes. He could become a real Emperor only by eliminating this party from Germany.

But though Charles thus saw clearly, he did not see far enough, and the greatest obstacle to his policy and the secret of his failure, was his own ignorance of the situation and his consequent miscalculation of forces. Politics and war he understood, but of religion he knew little and of theology still less. Complete as was his grasp of the externals, his understanding of the real issues was almost laughably slight. He could appreciate neither the importance of the questions in debate, nor weigh the reasons advanced on either side—the whole thing was Hebrew to him. Consequently, though he was less violent in his opinions than his religious advisers, he steadfastly maintained his Catholicism, remained incapable of comprehending the objections made to Catholic doctrine and practice by the Lutherans, and never had a glimmer of the true grounds of revolt from the Church. As Emperor he demanded and expected obedience to his mandates, which appeared to him wholly reasonable; and he could attribute to nothing else than obstinacy and disloyalty the refusal of the princes to submit to the authority of the Pope until a general council should finally determine the matters at issue.

It added to the complications at Augsburg that Clement and Charles were at cross purposes. Both desired unity and peace, but the only unity that the Pope valued was the restoration of his authority over the revolted portion of the Church. Persuasion or violence were all one to him, so Protestantism was suppressed. The Emperor also desired the

suppression of Protestantism, but he recognized that certain real grievances underlay the revolt, and that the only guarantee of continued unity was the concession of reasonable reforms by a general council. He would be a second Sigismund and convoke a second Council of Constance, that should really accomplish what had not been done at Constance. No wonder the Pope shivered with apprehension at the very word "council," and that he temporized, promised reluctantly and with little intention of performing what he promised.

But though Charles had been forced to yield much at Regensburg, it must not be supposed that he had really changed his plans for the suppression of the Protestant faith or the increase of the imperial authority. He had only bowed to the inevitable and postponed the execution of what he purposed; the time would yet come when the sword must decide whether Protestantism was to win for itself toleration in Germany. A careful study of the situation in Germany at the conclusion of these two Diets, and an equally careful estimate of the resources available to the Emperor, leads to the conclusion that three courses were open to him, and that choice of a single policy and firm prosecution of it had a reasonable prospect of success. He might continue the compromise of the Peace of Nürnberg and grant Protestantism a limited toleration by personal favor, not as a legal status; he might press his idea of a general council, and, staking everything on what that might accomplish, use all his power so to guide that body as to bring about peaceful comprehension of the Lutherans in the Church; or he might assemble his forces, bide his time, and at the proper moment invade Germany and establish a strong imperial government and a united Church on the ruins of the princely oligarchy. Unfortunately for Charles, he was an opportunist by nature, accustomed to postpone decisions and let events decide for him. Instead of adopting one consistent policy, he tried all three in turn during the next fifteen years, and sometimes simultaneously—and failed.

CHAPTER III

THE SCHMALKALD WAR

JOHN THE STEADFAST did not live long to enjoy the brightening prospects of the Lutherans, consequent upon the conclusion of the Peace of Nürnberg. He died August 16, 1531, and was succeeded by his son, John Frederick, a choleric and impatient man, mighty at meats and drinks and at little else, who had by no means the high opinion of Luther that his father had cherished. As heir apparent he had more than once openly expressed his disfavor, and while as prince he treated the reformer with the respect due to one who was in some sense the leader of the movement, he was quite sensible of his own power and dignity, and that his was the final responsibility of decision, and he was more disposed than his predecessors to independence of thought and action.

John Frederick was, however, little fitted by character or training for the part of leader, and too indolent to charge himself with the necessary labor of such a part. As before, Landgrave Philip, of Hesse, was quite willing to enact this rôle, for which he had some qualifications and more ambition. He played his part in a way that well illustrates the hollowness of the Protestant pretenses of the time and the partiality of Protestant historians of all times. To believe what was then asserted and has been commonly written since of this period, is to get the impression that the meek and harmless Protestant lamb was ever at the point of being devoured by the fierce Catholic wolf. But when one gets at the facts, he finds the truth to be that both parties played both rôles with equal facility and skill, and each was alternately lamb or wolf as circumstances compelled or policy impelled. It was now the Protestant turn to play wolf.

Duke Ulrich, of Würtemberg, was one of the worst German princes of the age, and that is saying much. He had all the faults, public and private, that a ruler could well have, and if he had any virtues he contrived to conceal them so thoroughly that no contemporary mentions them. After a long misrule, in which he made the very earth groan with his crimes, and contrived to alienate all classes of his subjects, nobles, burghers and peasants alike, he made private war against the city of Reutlingen and took it by a treacherous surprise. This was in 1519. The Swabian League rose against him and drove him from his dominion. All Southern Germany rejoiced, while all good men breathed more freely that this

drunkard, libertine and tyrant no longer remained in the fatherland to vex them. After various mutations, the duchy had fallen to the Emperor, and had by him in 1531 been bestowed on his brother Ferdinand. Duke Ulrich had ever since his deposition been a wanderer, vainly attempting to interest other princes in helping him to regain throne and estates.

This old reprobate had now experienced a timely "conversion" to Protestantism, in virtue of which he began with fresh hope to seek the aid of Protestant princes toward his restoration. Philip of Hesse, probably having a fellow-feeling for such a scamp (*arcades ambo*), and unable to resist the prospect of so important a gain for his party, was led to give his active support. Francis I, delighted at any time to make mischief in Germany, furnished financial aid; Philip raised a strong force and easily defeated the feeble opposition of Ferdinand; so that, in May, 1534, Duke Ulrich was returned in triumph to the home of his ancestors. Strange to say, his people received him willingly, for while he had formerly chastised them with whips the Habsburgs had chastised them with scorpions. Besides, they no doubt hoped his reign would be short, as he was now an old man, and they expected much from his son, Christopher, who was as worthy of their regard as the father was unworthy. The fact, however, that a single prince could thus set at defiance the Emperor's disposition of Würtemberg and wrest from the house of Habsburg this coveted possession, at the same time transforming it into a Protestant principality and adding its military and financial strength to the Schmalkald League, measures the weakness of the imperial authority better than pages of disquisition on the constitution of the Empire.

The Duke now showed the new convert's zeal in promoting the faith he had adopted, tempered by a discretion unusual in him. Ferdinand was compelled to recognize the situation and renounce his claim to Würtemberg, and to ratify the Emperor's promise that none should be brought before the Imperial Courts on account of religion; while on his part Duke Ulrich was forbidden to compel his subjects to accept the Reformation. Perhaps he used no compulsion, but he left unexerted no expedient short of that to extend the new faith. The theologian Brenz was called to Stuttgart to direct the work, which on the whole took on a Lutheran cast, though many of the preachers were Zwinglians, and the Duke was himself well disposed toward that party. He was, however, more anxious for unity than for any one form of Protestant worship or theology, and he succeeded in a few years in making his domains moderately Lutheran. He quite surpassed the other princes in his unscrupulous rapacity, though the feat was difficult. The churches and convents were plundered of all their valuables, and their lands were confiscated. The proceeds were spent in eating, drinking and luxury, and

as the debts of the prince continually increased, so did the taxes of his subjects. It was a Reformation that did not reform: the country ceased to be Catholic without really becoming Protestant. Thirty years later, Jacob Andrea, a Tübingen theologian, could find "only dissolute, epicurean, bestial living; nothing but gluttony, drunkenness, covetousness, pride and blasphemy."[1] This testimony, from a favorably disposed witness, indicates that the Protestantizing of Würtemberg cannot be described as an unmixed blessing.

Many things have been passed over in our survey of the progress of the Reformation, not because they were unworthy of notice, but for lack of space. The historian must practice the art of selection; to tell everything is to tell nothing. Little attention, therefore, has been paid to the Anabaptists, for the reason chiefly that they had no part in the affairs that we have been considering. But they had come to be a numerous people. Nearly every city in Germany contained its group of Anabaptists, until such time as the authorities decided to tolerate their presence no longer. They were the only party among those protesting against the errors of Rome who were logical and thoroughgoing. They alone accepted in absolute good faith and followed to its necessary consequences the principle avowed by the leading reformers, that the Scriptures were the sole source of religious authority. With Luther and Zwingli this was merely a convenient controversial weapon to be employed against the Romanists when the latter appealed to the authority of Pope and Councils and the Fathers; it was never a principle heartily accepted and candidly applied. The Anabaptists alone had penetrated beneath the surface of traditional Christianity and comprehended the real Gospel of Jesus. They were centuries in advance of their time in perceiving that the Good News of salvation, as taught by Jesus, was a social gospel, and that the acceptance of it implied and necessitated a reconstruction of society until all institutions could endure the measurement of the Golden Rule. In a word, the Anabaptists were the real reformers, and the only real reformers, of the sixteenth century.[2] They were also more sensitive to the social renovation then in progress than others, and wished to make that renovation more complete than there was any reasonable prospect of its becoming. They were more far-sighted and consistent than practical.

It was the misfortune of the German groups of Anabaptists to fall into the hands of incompetent and untrained leaders. In Switzerland, and for a time in Southern Germany, they were led by men who were the

[1] Quoted by Janssen, 5: 426.

[2] The fact must not be overlooked that the name Anabaptist was used in the Reformation to describe different groups, some of whom had no real title to the appellation. Some called Anabaptists would be described to-day as Baptists, but other groups would now be called Quakers, and others still anarchists and communists.

peers in learning, eloquence and character of the greatest among the reformers, but the case was otherwise in Central and Northern Germany. There men of little knowledge though of great zeal took the lead. Chief among these was Melchior Hofmann. He had been a furrier, became one of Luther's early disciples, and was regarded with considerable favor by the Wittenberg leader, who gave him a testimonial and used influence to procure him a place of labor. Hofmann was profoundly affected by Luther's teachings regarding the speedy coming of the Last Day,[1] which are so frequent and emphatic in the reformer's writings almost to the end of his life. In 1526 Hofmann published at Stockholm a little book, containing an interpretation of Daniel, on the lines of Luther's teaching, but going a step further than Luther had ever gone in attempting to fix the exact year for the ending of the age and the coming of Christ, namely, 1633. Even after this, he was still in favor with the Lutherans, and does not seem to have been finally repudiated by them until his adoption of Zwinglian views a year or two later. Chiliasm might be tolerable in Lutheran circles, but the very name of Zwingli was anathema.

Hofmann went further than Zwinglianism and became an Anabaptist, and at the same time took up his abode in Strassburg, where there was a strong group of this sect. He now announced that Strassburg was to be the New Jerusalem of the coming age, and the year 1635 was to be the time of its consummation. From this center the prophet (as he was now called) made evangelistic tours in Germany and Holland, gaining many disciples. As the excitement increased in Strassburg the magistrates took the matter in hand, and when the date arrived for the establishment of the New Jerusalem Hofmann was languishing in prison, where he was detained until his death. Ordinary folk would have found this disconcerting, but the enthusiasm of most Anabaptists was proof against discouragement, and a new prophet speedily came to revive the drooping spirits of the weaker sort. This was Jan Matthys, a baker of Haarlem, who had become a convert to Hofmann's views during one of the latter's evangelistic tours. Strassburg being now unavailable, Matthys and his followers looked about for another and more promising site for the New Jerusalem. This they found with no great difficulty in the city of Münster, Westphalia.

Münster was just then in the throes of a political and religious revolu-

[1] His writings are full of passages like the following: "The world is running so hastily towards its end that serious thoughts often occur as to whether the Last Day may not break before the translation of the Scriptures into German can be completed. For it is certain that no more temporal things prophesied in the Scriptures are to be fulfilled. The Roman Empire has fallen; the Turk has reached his height; the glory of the Papacy is declining, and the world is cracking at all ends, as though about to break and fall." Introduction to Daniel, 1530. LDS, 41: 233.

tion. It was one of the numerous German Sees in which the bishop exercised a secular jurisdiction, as well as a religious; but it had also been a partially free city, having a council elected by its citizens. Bernard Rothmann had come to Münster in 1529 and preached the Lutheran doctrine, with such success as to win to his support the majority of both clergy and citizens. A revolution, half political, half religious, had followed; the burghers rose against the bishop and insisted on complete independence. By the intervention of Philip of Hesse the bishop was induced to resign his civil authority, and the town was recognized as Lutheran (February 14, 1533). It was at this juncture that Matthys turned his eyes in that direction and chose Münster as the scene of his future labors. The way was further prepared for him by Rothmann's rapid advance toward Anabaptism, which was made plain by his publication of a "Confession of Two Sacraments," not only advocating the baptism of believers and rejecting that of infants, but even defining baptism as "dipping or completely plunging into water." It does not appear that this method of baptizing was ever practiced in Münster, for when, some time later, a large number of the people were baptized by certain "apostles" of Matthys, an eye-witness says that they were baptized from pails of water. In a few weeks after these envoys of Matthys arrived at Münster, and proclaimed the new gospel, they had made so many adherents in the town that at the next municipal election the Anabaptists were able to choose a council mainly composed of their own number. They were now in full control of the city.[1]

Matthys himself now came on and took the leadership, and Anabaptists flocked into the town from all sides, though in numbers fewer than was expected. They were largely artisans and a few peasants of the better class. For a long time previous to the Reformation, Inquisitors had noted that certain crafts were honeycombed with heresy. Specific mention of weavers is made in many Catholic documents as thus under general suspicion; weavers, hatters and furriers seem to have furnished many recruits to the Anabaptists; and it was their membership in the guilds that gave them political control in Münster. Their power was speedily used to promote the religious and social reforms of their programme. Community of goods was established. The prophet and some of his followers had almost daily "revelations," and under such guidance no folly was too great to be committed. There is no doubt that Matthys became insane in consequence of his religious enthusiasm, and others

[1] Kerssenbroick, *Geschichte der Wiedertäuffer zu Münster*, 1568, published in German translation from the Latin MS. in 1771, and reprinted 1881; Newman, "History of Antipedobaptism," Philadelphia, 1897, chs. xxi, xxii; Janssen, 5: 449 *seq.*; Keller, *Geschichte der Wiedertäufer und ihres Reichs zu Münster*, Münster, 1860; Kautsky, "Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation," London, 1897, pp. 216–293; Bax, "Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists," London, 1906.

came little short of that result. The noise of these things went abroad, and the bishop, repenting of his concessions, gathered a considerable force and laid siege to the city. Matthys received a "vision" commanding him to make a sortie against the besiegers, and despite the advice of his followers insisted on being obedient to the heavenly vision and was killed.

One of his disciples, John Bockhold, of Leyden, then declared himself appointed by God to succeed to the leadership and seems to have been accepted without question. He soon proclaimed that the kingdom of David was to be reëstablished in Münster, the new Mount Zion, and that he was King David. He found no more difficulty in persuading his followers to receive this new revelation than the late John Alexander Dowie had in persuading his disciples to accept him as Elijah the Third. There have been credulous fools in all ages, and there are plenty of such to-day, ready to believe without question and without evidence, and even against evidence, whatever some insane enthusiast or cunning impostor tells them in the name of God. King David speedily established a harem, and encouraged his followers to imitate his example, which many of them did, taking to themselves wives as they wished. The fact that there were many more women than men in the city at the time is not without significance in this connection. This practice of polygamy at Münster was ever afterwards made a chief ground of reproach against the Anabaptists, especially by the Lutherans, and this in spite of the fact that such practice was never even proposed by members of the party elsewhere. We shall presently see how well qualified the Lutherans were to cast the first stone.

Though the bishop could not muster force enough to take the city, he was able to make the investment complete, and the town began to suffer from famine. Dissensions broke out and King David had great difficulty in maintaining his authority. In spite of the fervid appeals that were sent out from time to time to Anabaptists elsewhere to come and share the glories and privileges of the New Jerusalem, no attempt was made for the relief of the town. Perhaps Anabaptists were overawed by the display of military force; perhaps they had heard of the doings in the town and disapproved; what is certain is that they made no sign. At length a party opposed to King David opened the gates, the besieging forces gained entrance and all was over but the slaughter of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty. The leaders, after inhuman tortures, were hung up in iron cages to the tower of St. Lambert's church, in the chief market-place, to die of exposure and starvation. There they hung until a few years ago, when it became necessary to repair the tower. A few bones only remained and these were removed, but the cages were

hung again to the remodeled tower. In the town hall, the curator (by the way, a woman) shows visitors of our day the big two-handed sword of the prophet, with which many of his deluded followers were beheaded; the pincers which were heated red-hot and used to tear the flesh from the bones of these great criminals; and lastly the withered hand of John of Leyden, a ghastly and repulsive relic. And these are all the memorials existing to-day of that Anabaptist uprising, which might be called the comedy of the Reformation if the ending had been less grimly tragic.

We have little occasion to follow out the results of this unfortunate affair, further than to remark that it was made the pretext for relentless persecution of all Anabaptists, in which Protestants were even more active than Catholics. It is the effect of the Münster episode on the Lutherans that is of chief interest now. The Catholic party made the most of the incident to discredit reform; they did not suffer it to be forgotten that Rothmann, who began the new order of things in Münster, and continued active in them to the end, was a disciple of Luther and went to the city with Luther's approval. The Catholics taunted the Lutherans with this defection of one of their number, and affected to consider it no defection, but the legitimate development of principles taught by the Lutherans themselves. And, taken in connection with another scandalous defection among the Lutherans that occurred shortly after, they were able to make out a plausible case against the reformers.

We can better comprehend the real significance of the so-called Münster "uproar" than could its contemporaries. It was something more than a sectarian disorder; it was the attempt of a free city to defy the princely oligarchy and take an independent course of reformation. The fanatical excesses of the Anabaptists afforded an excellent pretext to proceed against the city on avowed religious grounds, for an offense that was gravest on its political side. There was a prospect that Münster might enlist other towns in a contest with the princes, and that was really the city's unforgivable offense, not its Anabaptism, nor even its communism and polygamy, though these gave Lutherans a chance to raise a great hue and cry. The revolt of Münster became a religious movement by accident—because of the incongruous element introduced into its population by the incoming of Matthys and his throng of followers. It was essentially a political and social movement, an attempt to realize a democratic life and municipal independence.

A more important movement of the same nature was going on at the same time in Lübeck, which, had it proved successful, would have transformed the old aristocratic Hansa into a powerful league of municipal democracies, and secured the union of the maritime towns of the Baltic with the commercial cities of Southern Germany, like Nürnberg and

Augsburg. This would have been a more powerful combination than the Schmalkald League. There were two reasons for the failure of the ambitious attempt. The first was, that it came a century too late. Conditions had changed; the commerce of Europe was taking a new course. The Mediterranean was no longer the only route between the East and Europe; it was not even the best route; the Netherlands and England were beginning to forge to the front as commercial nations, making their way to India by the Cape of Good Hope. The second reason was, that the plan became entangled with the religious struggle.

Lübeck openly adopted the Lutheran faith in 1531, and at the same time a democratic revolution took place in the city. The leader in both movements was Jürgen Wullenweber, a man of remarkable gifts, ambitious, but devoted to the interests of Lübeck as he saw them. Under his leadership the town undertook to recover the former prestige and power of the great Hansa, now somewhat declined. A great sum of money was raised, largely by confiscation of the ornaments of the churches, and the services of a large body of mercenary troops was procured. For a time all went well. A successful war was waged with the Netherlands, Denmark was nearly conquered, and the triumph of the Hansa seemed near at hand. Then came reverses, defeats by sea and land, religious jealousies caused increasing disunion, and the plan of forming around the Baltic a confederacy of strong, democratic, independent towns, with affiliations elsewhere, broke down. Wullenweber's enemies prevailed in Lübeck itself, and after imprisonment and torture he was beheaded as a traitor. With his downfall and the failure of his magnificent but impracticable project, the last force that could make headway against the oligarchic rulers of the Empire was dissipated. The cities of Germany were still a strong force, and one always to be reckoned with, but there was no longer a possibility that they could take first place. It was irrevocably decided that the Reformation was not to become a burgher revolution. The time for that was not yet, though it was coming.

Philip of Hesse, the Magnanimous, who had once before endangered the whole Protestant movement, was now the means of involving it in great scandal and disgrace, not to say danger. He had married, from the usual political motives, Christina of Saxony, daughter of Duke George, Luther's redoubtable opponent. Almost immediately after his marriage he began to be unfaithful to her, and, after she had borne him three sons and as many daughters, he finally declared himself unable longer to maintain conjugal relations with her. In defense of this decision he alleged against her both moral and physical infirmities, but the only reason seems to have been his own incurably lecherous nature. He was, or thought himself, unable to live a life of continence, and the result was

frequent adultery, about which his conscience troubled him enough to make him abstain from the eucharist, but not enough to make him abstain from his mistresses. At the court of his sister he made the acquaintance of Margarethe von der Saal, a beautiful young woman, who was willing to be his only under seal of marriage. Some of Philip's apologists urge in his behalf that he was too honorable to repudiate his wife, but we may conjecture that fear of Duke George was the chief source of his honorable scruple; to which may be added the fact that, while his wife had every reason to divorce him, he had no pretext for seeking a divorce from her.

In this dilemma, Philip, who was becoming quite learned in the Scriptures and in theology, happily bethought him of the example of the Patriarchs. He could see no reason why, if Jacob had two wives, and sisters at that, a like privilege might not be allowed him. His injured wife, with a complaisance difficult to understand,[1] signed a document giving her consent to his taking a second wife. In return Philip promised that only her children should be legal heirs of his titles and estates.[2] He now sought learned opinions on this matter from the theologians of his own court, then from Bucer, and finally induced the Strassburg theologian to visit his Wittenberg confreres and obtain their sanction. Luther had already been ambiguous in his public teaching on this point; as the Old Testament plainly contained examples of polygamy, and as he found no explicit condemnation of polygamy in the New Testament, his conservative principle of interpretation led logically to the conclusion that polygamy cannot be reckoned a sin under the Christian dispensation. Nevertheless, he did not feel quite easy in his mind about that conclusion; it was logical, no doubt, and yet it would have most awkward consequences if it were publicly proclaimed. On the other hand the Landgrave was a very pillar of Protestantism, and if he were rebuffed he might be lost to the cause. Rome might well hasten to receive him back into her fold, at a greater sacrifice than annulment of his marriage and smoothing the way for a new union; and the Emperor would welcome Philip as an ally at any time and with all possible warmth.[3]

Luther had always been consistently opposed to divorce, and Melanchthon had advised Henry VIII to commit bigamy rather than divorce Catharine of Aragon, but they hesitated long before giving like advice to a German prince. At length Melanchthon drew up a paper, dated December 30, 1539, in the form of a letter, but treated by Philip and

[1] She afterwards declared that her assent had been obtained while she was unconscious! Janssen, 6: 82.

[2] The marriage contract with Fräulein von der Saal, in which this promise is legally confirmed, is given by Rady, *Die Reformatoren in ihrer Beziehung zur Doppelehe des Landgrafen Philipp*, Frankfurt, 1890, pp. 43, 44.

[3] CR, 3: 851–856.

often called by writers who refer to it as a "dispensation." This long, rambling and ambiguous document does great credit to Melanchthon's gifts for compromise, and crowns all his efforts in that line by showing how God and the devil, lechery and virtue, can be "harmonized" after the fashion in which he delighted. He beats about the bush through interminable sentences, with distinctions between a law and a dispensation, the original divine law of marriage and the license permitted by God to the patriarchs, the obligations of chastity even on a man who should have a second wife, and the like ambiguities and edifying generalities, but at last comes to the point, albeit in a lame and hesitating way, in the following opinion:

> If, however, your Grace should at length resolve to take another wife, we think this should be kept secret, as was said above of the dispensation; namely, that your Grace, and the Lady, with some confidential persons, should know your Grace's mind and conscience through confession. From this no particular rumor or scandal would arise; for it is not unusual for princes to have concubines; and although all the people would not know what the circumstances were, the intelligent would be able to guess them, and would be better pleased with such a quiet way of life, than with adultery and other wild and licentious courses. Nor are we to heed everything that people say, provided our consciences stand right. Thus far, and we deem this right. For that which is permitted in the law of Moses concerning marriage is not forbidden in the gospel, which does not change the rule of outward life, but brings in eternal righteousness and eternal life, and kindles a true obedience to God, and would set our corrupt natures straight again.[1]

The letter as a whole comes to this: "We really wish you wouldn't, but it is not explicitly forbidden in Scripture, though it is illegal and would be a bad general rule, but whatever you do *by all means keep it secret.*" And this is so much insisted on, the writer returning to it again and yet again, as to make it evident this was the one thing uppermost in his mind.

Encouraged by this letter to defy the law of the Empire[2] and the Christian sentiment of his age, Philip was duly "married" to Fräulein von der Saal by Melander, his court preacher, on March 4, 1540, in the presence of Bucer, Melanchthon and other "honorable men." The Landgrave wrote a letter of thanks to Luther for his advice, and the reformer's reply shows an uneasy conscience: "We want to keep the

[1] The document, which is described as an "Answer" to Philip, was drawn up by Melanchthon, and was published at Wittenberg 1539. Original in CR, 3: 856; signed first by Luther and Melanchthon as authors, then, as agreeing with them, by Bucer, Antonius Corvinus, Adam Fulda, Joannes Lemingus, Justus Winther, Dionisius Melander, Balthaser Raid. English version in Hare, "Vindication of Luther," Cambridge, 1885, pp. 237–240; reprinted in Richard's "Melanchthon," pp. 274–279.

[2] Charles had proclaimed a new criminal code for the Empire, in which the penalty for bigamy was death. This only reënacted an ancient German law.

affair a secret for the sake of the example, which every one would follow, even at last the coarse peasants.[1] There are also other reasons as great or even greater why you should keep it to yourself and not avow it, which would make a lot of trouble. Wherefore your Grace will please be secret and improve your life as you promised."[2]

But the affair was far from secret; it soon became notorious as the greatest scandal of a scandalous time. The Landgrave himself, doubtless at the instigation of his new "wife" and her ambitious mother, had a public repetition of the marriage ceremony, to which several people of rank were invited.[3] A few weeks later Duke George was able to arrest the mother of the bride in his domains and obtain from her baggage some incriminating documents, so that the scandal became worse. Melanchthon, as usual, proved himself to have all the constancy and firmness of a weather-vane. He had been perfectly obsequious to the prince, and now he was horribly frightened by the gathering storm. What he flattered himself by calling his "conscience"—nothing more ethical than a lively fear of consequences—began to trouble him so seriously that the worry, joined to an attack of malarial fever, threatened his life. Luther, in no way dismayed, went to Melanchthon's sick bed at Weimar and always afterwards maintained that he received his friend back from the grave in answer to prayer. What really happened was that his ruder nature infused enough strength into the shrinking cowardice of Melanchthon's soul to hearten the latter up a little and make his recovery possible.[4] One would not dishonor God by attributing to him any part in the transaction.

[1] It is remarks like this, plentifully besprinkling Luther's writings, that caused and justify the saying of Professor Pollard in the Cambridge Modern History, that Luther "had the upstart's contempt for the class from which he sprang." In his later years Luther too often forgot that he was the son of a peasant and remembered only that he was the friend of princes.

[2] This letter (for obvious reasons?) is not contained in any of the collections of Luther's correspondence published by various editors of his works, but may be found in Lenz, *Briefwechsel des Landgraf Philipps mit Bucer*, Berlin, 1880, I: 362, and in Smith, "Life of Luther," p. 375. Melanchthon wrote July 24 to the same effect, CR, 3: 849; cf. 1065. On May 24, Luther wrote to Philip: "I have received your Grace's present of a cartload of Rhenish wine and I thank your Grace humbly for it." Lenz, I: 361–363. Luther seems to have received rather more than thirty pieces of silver.

[3] How inadequate and mendacious were the grounds on which Philip asked for his "dispensation," and the reformers acquiesced, are shown by the fact that he maintained continuous marital relations with both "wives" after his bigamous marriage, with the exception of his five years' imprisonment, during which he was deprived of the society of both. His lawful consort bore him three children after his bigamy while he had seven sons and one daughter by his second "wife," the last born in 1554. See the genealogical table in Mogen, *Historia captivitatis Philippi magnanimi Hessiae*, 1766, p. 163.

[4] Melanchthon describes Luther to his friend Camerarius as "endeavoring to raise me from my desponding state of mind, not only by administering consolation, but salutary reproof. If he had not come to me, I should certainly have died." CR, 3: 1077; cf. account in Seckendorf, iii: 314, and Richards' "Melanchthon," 272–274.

Luther met the crisis with his accustomed mixture of bravery and moral insensibility. He never would admit, even to his own soul, that he had done anything wrong; and he was especially vehement in maintaining that the Catholics had no call to criticize his acts or words. In this he had some show of justification: it was impossible that the Protestant divines should outdo the scandalous things that the Church had often done. But (here was the rub) the Protestants were professing better things; they had been urging the past scandals of the Church as a reason for reform; and here they were doing something, not worse than the Church had done, since that was impossible, but something as bad as her worst. Luther not only could not but would not see this, and he was now adding to his moral turpitude by professing a willingness to do any needful amount of hard lying to cover up his original fault. "What is it," said he, "if for the good and sake of the Christian Church one should tell a good, strong lie?" Again and again he urged the Landgrave to deny the whole thing, or at least to return "an ambiguous answer" to all questions. "What one knows only in a private capacity one cannot know publicly," therefore it is allowable to make the private Yes a public No! He compared his knowledge of Philip's bigamy to the knowledge of sin that the priest obtains in the confessional, which it is his duty to deny if need be; and finally he blasphemously claims for his untruthfulness the example of the Christ, who, though omniscient, declares in the gospel "The Son knoweth not the day."[1] By such twistings and turnings Luther endeavored to justify the unjustifiable.

It is significant that none of the biographers of Luther have ventured to uphold his part in the transaction. Some of them have passed over the whole matter in dishonest silence; few have had courage to tell all the facts; and with one accord they have pronounced this the most deplorable act in his entire career. It gave Catholics a splendid opportunity, which they did not fail to improve, to say to the world, "Behold

[1] See the series of citations and letters in Smith, p. 381 *seq.* Bucer was worse than Luther, if worse be possible. The Strassburg divine advised Philip to issue this public declaration: "He was everywhere accused of having been forgetful of his conjugal duty and honor, and of having taken another wife, in violation of the universal laws of Christendom and the decrees of the Emperor. Herein, however, gross injustice was done him; whoever had imagined and set about such things were liars and could only have wanted to vent their personal hatred and spite against him. He was not so utterly Godforsaken as not to be aware that Christianity had restored the sacred bond of marriage to its pristine purity, and that not only ministers of the Church, but all Christians, lay or clerical, were bound to have no more than one wife or one husband. He would be loath indeed, whether for himself or for others, to violate the sanctity of God's blessed gift of marriage. He begged accordingly that no credence might be given to such false reports raised against him by his ill-wishers." Philip, with a fine show of virtue, refused to tell this lie. Indeed it was speedily made impossible for him to do so, by the publication of a pamphlet written by a Hessian preacher named Lenning, who took the fictitious name of Huldreich Neobolus, in which he openly justified polygamy. Janssen, 6: 115, 126. Cf. Rady, p. 66 *seq.*, 89.

the fruits of Protestantism." It disheartened and weakened the forces of reform. Kolde puts it with sufficient mildness when he says: "It is highly probable that the beginning of the decline of Protestantism as a political power coincides with this marriage of the Prince of Hesse."

The closing months of Clement VII's Pontificate were spent in consultations and negotiations concerning the holding of the long-promised Council. Constitutionally unable to make a final decision upon any policy, constantly "letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'" he dallied with all parties and satisfied none until death ended the game, September 25, 1534. On October 13th following, the Conclave elected as his successor Cardinal Alexander Farnese, now sixty-seven years of age, who took the title of Paul III. The choice was apparently not a happy one for those who wished well to the Church. The personal character of Cardinal Farnese was notoriously bad, and had been the main cause of his rejection at two previous Conclaves; he had a large number of illegitimate children, some of whom he openly acknowledged. He began his pontificate with an act of frank nepotism, by giving the cardinal's hat to his two nephews, aged respectively fourteen and sixteen years. Nothing more scandalous had occurred in the history of the Papacy, and the future seemed anything but bright.

Nevertheless, the pontificate of Paul III justifies the paradox that a better man might have made a worse Pope. Adrian VI had been a pious and well-intentioned man, but a failure as Pontiff; Paul III was essentially a bad man, but he was a man of intelligence and skilled in the arts of diplomacy and government. His pontificate was therefore a brilliant one. It marks a new spirit and a new policy in the Roman Church, the rousing of all its forces against Protestantism, the beginning of that reaction later to be known as the Counter-Reformation. This new spirit was speedily manifested in the appointment to the college of Cardinals of men whose ability and piety permanently raised the tone of that body: Gaspari Contarini, Jacopo Sadoleto, Reginald Pole and Pietro Caraffa. Two of these new Cardinals, Contarini and Caraffa, already represented opposing parties in the Roman Church, the Liberal and the Conservative; and at this time it was by no means certain which would obtain the upper hand. Having a more intelligent appreciation than his predecessors of the condition of the Church and the imperative need of reform, the new Pope appointed a commission of the Cardinals to consider this matter, and in due time they prepared and presented a plan of reform, *Consilium de emendenda ecclesia.*

> The authors of this remarkable document, after describing the Church as not merely tottering, but actually fallen in ruin, accused some of the former Popes of having chosen their ministers, not with

a view to learn from them what their duty required, but in order to have cunning advocates to prove that it was lawful for Popes to do what they pleased. "Hence, as flattery attends princes as the shadow does the body, doctors began to teach that, as the Popes were the lords of all benefices, they could not be guilty of simony, inasmuch as they sold what was their own property. From which source, as from the Trojan horse, so many abuses and such grievous diseases have broken into the Church of God that we now see it laboring almost without a hope of salvation and the name of Christ blasphemed by the unbelieving through our fault; we say it again, through our own fault." From this introduction they proceed to enumerate the abuses which prevailed in the Church: Abuses in dispensing with its laws. In ordaining ignorant youths of the vilest birth and of the worst morals. "Hence arise innumerable scandals, contempt for the ecclesiastical order, and the veneration for divine services not only lessened, but now very nearly extinct." In the bestowal of benefices, and above all of bishoprics, on non-residents. In the imposition of pensions on benefices, in favor of wealthy ecclesiastics, and the consequent withdrawal of what was intended for the support of divine service and of the incumbents. Exchanges of livings by agreements, "which are all simoniacal, and in which nothing is regarded but money." The bequest of benefices and bishoprics by dispensations, nullifying the law that the children of priests should not inherit the benefices of their fathers. Abuses in expectations and reservations. In conferring several incompatible benefices and even bishoprics on the same person. In granting not one, but several bishoprics to cardinals. "We think this matter is of the greatest importance to the Church of God; for the office of cardinals and bishops are inconsistent. A cardinal assists the Pope in governing the whole Church, whereas the duty of the bishop is to feed his sheep, which he cannot do unless he dwells among them." Non-residence of bishops and beneficed clergymen. "For, in the name of God, what sight can be more afflicting to a Christian man than to see the solitude of the churches. Almost all the pastors have deserted their flocks, and the faithful are given over to mere mercenaries." Neglect of their duties by the cardinals. Abuses and impediments thrown in the way of bishops attempting to govern their dioceses and to punish the guilty. "For bad men obtain exemption from the authority of their bishops, or if they cannot obtain an exemption they immediately betake themselves to the office of the Datary and there secure immunity for money." In the religious orders. "We are of opinion that all conventual orders should be abolished, but in order to prevent injury to any one, it will be sufficient to decree that no new members be admitted." Public sacrilege in many monasteries. Impious and irreverent treatment of sacred subjects in the public schools, especially in Italy; "nay, in the very churches." Abuses in the deception of country and simple folk by the innumerable superstitions introduced by the quæstuarii of the Holy Ghost, of St. Anthony, and others of this sort. "We think that these quæstuarii should be abolished." Abuses in absolution for simony. "To what a height, in the name of decency, has this pestilent vice come

to in the Church of God, so that some are not ashamed to commit simony and then to seek, nay buy, absolution for the offence, while retaining the benefices they purchased." In bequeathing the goods of the Church as private property, in indulgences, and in the transfer of legacies given for pious uses to the surviving relatives for money. The scandal given to all foreigners by the corrupt manners of the city of Rome, and by the open exhibition of shameless immorality by ecclesiastics in its streets.

The scheme of reform ends with these words: "If we have not done justice to the magnitude of the trust reposed in us, we have at least satisfied our conscience, not without hope that in your reign we shall see the Church of God purged, at peace with herself, and united into one body. You have taken the name of Paul: we trust you will imitate his charity. As he was chosen to spread the knowledge of the name of Christ among the heathen, we hope that you were elected to restore, in our hearts and in our works, that holy name which is now forgotten by the nations and by us ecclesiastics, to cure our sickness, to collect the flock into one fold, and to save us from the wrath of God and from the punishment which we have deserved and which is now ready to fall upon us."[1]

These proposals were much too bold and sweeping for acceptance by the Curia, which had indeed come to see the necessity of reform, yet stood shivering on the brink, and for the time took that attitude which modern politicians have made so familiar, of "favoring the general principle, but opposing this particular measure." As by the Catholics these propositions were regarded as too radical, so by the Protestants they were deemed not thorough enough, and besides their good faith was questioned. The Consilium was quietly suppressed at Rome, but was surreptitiously printed, and Luther reissued it in 1638 with sarcastic comments of his own.[2]

In the meantime matters had been moving rapidly. Paul III was an Italian prince, but he had not the family relations of Clement VII to bias all his political views and hamper his ecclesiastical action. He early decided that the Council so long demanded and promised should be held, but before issuing his call sent to Germany as his special envoy Cardinal Vergerio, who had long been an enthusiastic advocate of a council as the only means of preventing the complete overthrow of the Catholic religion. It was Vergerio's mission to smooth away difficulties, and if possible to obtain some pledge in advance from the Protestants that they would submit their claims to the Council and abide by its decision. He

[1] This scheme was afterwards put on the Index by Paul IV, though as Cardinal Caraffa he had been instrumental in drawing it up! This is probably the only instance of a Pope putting his own writings on the Index. If anyone questions whether the reformers were justified in their charges of corruption in the Roman Church, he should carefully study this document. Original in Le Plat, *Monumenta ad historiam Concilii Tridentini*, Louvain, 1782, 2: 596–597.

[2] Walch, 16: 1971 *seq.*

had an interview with Luther at Wittenberg at which the reformer took special pains to be impudent to the papal representative ("I played the genuine Luther," was his way of putting it), but promised to attend the Council if summoned. On June 2, 1536, the bull summoning the Council was issued, naming Mantua as the place and the following May as the time of meeting. The die was now cast; a Council had become a certainty.

The Protestants were now in an awkward dilemma. They had all along been professing themselves ready and anxious to submit their cause to a general Council. So late as October 14, 1529, they had issued a formal signed appeal for the holding of such a Council.[1] Now they must either appear before the coming Council with the certainty that they would be condemned, or cease forever to make such professions. To do the latter they were most unwilling, for it would discredit the sincerity of their previous professions and claims. But they were still less willing to do the former, since it would put them at once in the position of schismatics, heretics and rebels.

At once they chose their ground: they would refuse to have anything to do with the Council,[2] on the pretext that it was not "free," and because Germany in particular would have no fair representation in it. For this refusal they were able to find at least a partial justification in the fact that representation of their party was ignored in the papal summons. But what else could they have expected? The Council was to be constituted, like all previous ecumenical councils in the history of the Church, of the bishops of the Catholic Church, and the Lutherans had no bishops. It is true that, from the Council of Nice down, inferior clergy had been admitted to the floor of Councils as an act of grace, but they had no vote—the final decision had always rested with the bishops. Is it possible that this difficulty had never presented itself to the Lutherans, or that, having duly considered it, they had any real expectation that the constitution of a council would be revolutionized for their benefit? One cannot escape the conclusion that the Lutherans had not been sincere in their vociferous demands hitherto for a general Council, and their frequent pledges to abide by the decision of such a body. So long as there was little prospect that such a Council would be held, this was a good battle cry, a plausible plea to put forward to justify their attitude of opposition to the old Church.

The Elector of Saxony received the papal bull with great disfavor and

[1] Walch, 16: 492.

[2] "Hitherto the Protestants had claimed to be a party within the Old Church and had repeatedly requested a council to decide on the orthodoxy of their claims. Now, however, they boldly proclaimed that their communion was distinct from that of Rome." Smith, p. 308.

summoned a meeting of the Protestant Estates at Schmalkald in February, 1537. Luther was commissioned to draw up a new statement of beliefs, suitable to be presented to the Council, and the result of his labors was the Schmalkald Articles.[1] As fierce and warlike as Melanchthon was irenic, Luther produced a very different document from the Augsburg Confession. There is no longer any attempt to conceal or soften the Lutheran beliefs, but rather they are asserted with a boldness and clearness that leave no doubt of their wide departure from the ancient Catholic Faith. As to their general tone, let this single extract testify: "Lastly he [the Pope] is purely and simply a devil, for over against God he pushes on his lies about masses, purgatory, monkery, good works and divine service, and damns, kills and persecutes all Christians who refuse to extol and honor those abominations of his above all things. As soon, therefore, can we adore the devil himself for our Lord and God as we can tolerate the rule of his Apostle, the Pope or Antichrist. For to lie and murder, to send body and soul to eternal damnation, this is in truth the popish rule."[2] The articles were signed by a large number of Lutheran theologians and have ever since formed part of the official confession of Lutheranism, though they did not receive formal sanction until the adoption of the Book of Concord (1580), of which they form a part. Melanchthon, however, thought fit to qualify his subscription, and the declaration that the articles as a whole are "right and Christian," by this proviso: "But of the Pope I hold that if he will permit the gospel, the government of the bishops which he now has from others may be *jure humano* also conceded to him by us, for the sake of peace and the common tranquillity of those Christians who are, or may hereafter be, under him."

Luther having been taken ill and in consequence being compelled to leave for home, Melanchthon was commissioned to express further the attitude of the princes. This he did most unwillingly, as his letters inform us, but in their name he composed a little treatise concerning the power and primacy of the Pope, which was also signed by the theologians present and became known as the Appendix to the Schmalkald Articles.[3] In this he went nearly as far as Luther, though with less violence of language. With this Appendix, the articles became a declaration of war against Rome, which hardly needed the formal answer of the princes, sent March 5, 1537, to show that reunion with Rome was now hopeless. The Pope, indeed, by calling the Council had done what Luther could never do—he had made it impossible for the Lutherans to go back. It

[1] The German original may be found in LDS, 25: 109 *seq.*; Walch, 16: 1916 *seq.* English version, Jacobs, "Concord," 1: 303 *seq.*

[2] Part II, Art. iv, Of the Papacy, Jacobs, 1: 320.

[3] CR, III: 271. Given from Veit Dieterich's translation into German, long supposed to be the original, by Jacobs, "Concord," 1: 338–352.

was like the burning of his ships by Cortez, thenceforth they must conquer or be conquered; retreat was no longer a possibility.

The princes based their refusal[1] to take part in the proposed Council on the grounds, principally, that it was not to be held on German soil, as they had all along demanded, and that their case was virtually prejudged, since they were described in the bull as "condemned heretics." It was even proposed to hold a counter-council at Augsburg, at which nothing should be proposed or settled that was not based on the Scriptures. No human decrees, ordinances or writings should be adduced in matters that belong to faith or conscience. Hopes were even entertained that the Emperor could be induced to attend such a council. But this project of the Saxon Elector was wrecked on the insuperable difficulty of securing unity among the Protestants themselves. A fine business it would be to hold a council of their own, and fall to wrangling about doctrines, breaking up finally in disorder with nothing accomplished, the butt of the jeers of all Europe! So the Saxon theologians represented the matter to the Elector, who in the end saw the point and reluctantly abandoned his pet project.

The effect of the Schmalkald meeting was sobering; it gave an impulse toward Protestant unity more powerful than any felt previously. Luther and Melanchthon were at least partially convinced of the error of their former ways, that they had treated the Swiss as enemies when the latter were disposed to be brothers, and by thus promoting disunion they had weakened the Protestant cause. More than two years before the Schmalkald meeting overtures toward a better understanding had been made by the Zwinglians, and particularly by Martin Bucer, of Strassburg. In December, 1534, Melanchthon and Bucer had a conference at Cassel, in which they agreed on the following statement regarding the eucharist: "That the body of Christ is really and truly received, when we receive the sacrament; and bread and wine are signs, *signa exhibitiva*, which being given and received the body of Christ is at the same time given and received; and we hold that the bread and body are together, not by a mixing of their substances, but as a sacrament, and are given with the sacrament. As both parties hold that bread and wine remain, they hold that there is a sacramental conjunction."[2]

Luther was pleased to receive this statement with favor and now for the first time regarded union with the Swiss as possible and desirable. The agreement was submitted to other theologians on both sides and generally approved. A more formal conference of a larger body of delegates was now arranged, and was held at Wittenberg, May 22, 1536. Luther

[1] Luther and Melanchthon were not in favor of refusing to take part in the Council. See the opinion in CR, 3: 121, and De Wette, 5: 51.
[2] CR, 2: 808.

insisted that the Swiss should renounce their earlier opinion and confess the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. Bucer and his associates consented to this, so far as worthy communicants are concerned, but still denied that the real Christ is received by the wicked. Luther professed himself satisfied, and the hand of brotherly recognition was mutually given and received. Melanchthon now drew up articles of agreement, since known as the Wittenberg Concord;[1] and on May 29th these were subscribed by twenty-one persons present. With regard to the eucharist, the articles affirm "that with the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, presented and received."

From being unwilling to do anything toward union, Luther had now become desirous of doing more than was possible—he always saw facts through the medium of his own thought and emotion, never as they were. He now hoped that both sides might "bury the past and roll a stone on it." He might have accomplished this at Marburg, if he could have been persuaded then to show the spirit of moderation and conciliation that he had now displayed at Wittenberg. But the favorable opportunity had passed, never to return. Too many bitter things had been said, too many hostile things had been done, for peace to be made so easily and oblivion to follow so soon. Melanchthon saw more clearly, and said that the gulf between the two parties was too wide to be bridged by a mere form of words. Moreover, he knew better than Luther the temper of the Zwinglians, and rightly apprehended that further conflict was more probable than sudden peace. He believed that the Swiss delegates at Wittenberg had made larger concessions for the sake of peace than their churches would approve. So the fact proved to be; there was great opposition to the Concord among the Zwinglians on theological grounds, but for political reasons many of them waived their objections, at least for the time. The Concord was formally approved by most of the Zwinglian towns of Germany: Memmingen, Kempten, Esslingen, Reutlingen, Ulm, Augsburg, Frankfurt. At Constance, Lindau and Isny there were serious dissensions, the people believing that Bucer and his colleagues had conceded too much.

In consequence of these continued difficulties, the Elector of Saxony at the Schmalkald meeting took the affair out of the hands of the theologians, believing that a change of policy was imperative, and that union with the Zwinglians must be had at any reasonable price. It was in effect decided that the terms of the Concord should stand as a formal basis of union, but each party should interpret them in their own way. This was, in almost so many words, an agreement to disagree, but to seek

[1] German original in CR, 3: 75 *seq.*; Walch, 17: 2087 *seq.* English version in Jacobs, "Concord," 2: 254.

united action without insisting as hitherto on absolute theological identity. It was a great pity for the cause of Protestantism that so sensible and Christian a conclusion could not have been reached years before, and that it could not be consistently followed even now. Luther at first stoutly opposed the new policy, but he finally yielded to the Elector, and on December 1, 1537, he wrote a pacific letter to the towns of Zurich, Berne, Schaffhausen and St. Gall. "As to any points on which we cannot quite come to an understanding," he wrote very sensibly, "it is best that we should leave them for the present, and keep on friendly terms together till the troubled waters have subsided."[1] By this understanding with the Swiss, though no formal alliance was concluded, and by the admission to the Schmalkald League of Zwinglian towns of South Germany, the position of the Protestants was greatly strengthened, and the danger of a war of religion became less pressing.

From the beginning of the Reformation, two influential princes of Northern Germany had remained staunchly Catholic, and had been the chief obstacle to the extension of the new faith in that region. Death now removed these two barriers to the progress of the reform. In 1535 Joachim I, the Elector of Brandenburg, passed away and was succeeded by his son, Joachim II. The father had remained a zealous Catholic to the last, and had done more than any other man, save Duke George of Saxony, to hold the North to the old ways. The son was from the beginning inclined to the evangelical faith, and in 1539 openly introduced the Reformation into his domains. Not a member of the Schmalkald League, he was able to act as a mediator between that party and the Emperor, and his policy did much to prolong the peace and postpone the final inevitable conflict.

The death of Duke George, April 15, 1539, removed the strongest remaining prop of the Catholic Church in Germany. Conservatism, rather than opposition to evangelical truth, had kept him all his life in the Church of his fathers. He died expressing faith in the grace of Christ. One who obtains his entire knowledge of Duke George from Luther's intemperate scoldings, will have an idea of his character as untrue as unfavorable. There was much to admire in the sturdy old man, and we need not wonder that he found not a little to reprehend in the course of Luther and in the rude peasant manners that the latter carefully cultivated toward all his adversaries. His importance to the Catholic party was not overestimated when Duke Henry of Brunswick irreverently exclaimed that he would rather God in heaven were dead than Duke George; for the Duke was able and willing to do for the Catholics of Northern Germany what the Almighty would not do. The successor in

[1] De Wette, 5: 83 *seq.*

the duchy was his brother Henry, already a Lutheran. At the feast of Whitsuntide, the reformed rites were for the first time celebrated in Leipzig and thereafter were gradually extended throughout the duchy. A visitation of all the churches, under the direction of Luther and some of his Wittenberg colleagues, did much to extend and make permanent the Protestantism of ducal Saxony. Henry's reign was brief; he died in 1541 and was succeeded by his son Moritz (Maurice), who had married a daughter of Landgrave Philip of Hesse. Northern Germany was now practically a unit for Protestantism, and the cause should have been so strengthened by these changes as to be secure against attack. But jealousies were soon manifest; especially Duke Moritz was at odds with his cousin, John Frederick of Electoral Saxony, and out of this personal and family quarrel grew a great disaster to the Protestant cause.

Within the next few years, the Protestants assumed a more aggressive attitude than ever, and their continued progress gave the remaining Catholic estates of the Empire cause for serious alarm. It began to seem probable that the Reformation would sweep all before it, and end by transforming the entire Empire. The fresh encroachments of the Protestants on Catholic territory set at defiance the Peace of Nürnberg, and showed that they would be bound by no engagements from extending their faith whenever and wherever they had opportunity. They were no longer content with mere toleration; they plainly aimed at domination. The new religion was to be the means by which the princely oligarchy should completely triumph over the imperial power; and next to this it was to be the means by which the free cities should establish themselves in such independence as would mean their practical secession from the Empire.

The new line of progress was largely the secularization of the great episcopates, the remaining strongholds of Catholicism. The bishop of Naumberg died in 1541, and the Elector of Saxony used his power to make Nicholas Amsdorf his successor. Luther took the principal part in the ordination of the new bishop, thereby emphasizing the break between this See and Rome.[1] In 1542 the See of Meissen was protestantized in similar fashion, Duke Moritz being given a free hand in dealing with its affairs. Regensberg, in Southern Germany took a similar course. In the same year the Landgrave of Hesse invaded the duchy of Brunswick, drove out Duke Henry and forcibly introduced the Reformation. The city of Hildesheim expelled its bishop in 1544, with the connivance if not assistance of the Lutherans, and Bugenhagen was active in establishing the new Lutheran church there. But most disquieting of all,

[1] See documents in Walch, 17: 56 *seq.* Charles V tried in vain to secure consecration of Julius von Pflug, a Catholic.

the Elector and Archbishop of Cologne, Count Hermann von Weid, adopted the Lutheran views and attempted to reform his diocese. He called Bucer and Melanchthon to his aid, and in spite of the opposition of his chapter and the town council, carried out a drastic system of reform, without nominally separating from the Catholic Church. In 1543 he sought admission to the Schmalkald League, thus practically avowing himself a Protestant. This was perhaps to the Catholics the worst grievance of all—to lose this historic and powerful See was something that could not be contemplated with patience. Moreover, it would have the most serious consequences for the Empire, for, at the next imperial vacancy, there was a good prospect (if not a certainty) of a Protestant majority in the Electoral College.[1] This attempted reformation of Cologne may be taken as the turning-point in the plans of Charles V. He had never abandoned the hope of making the Empire once more fully Catholic; henceforth that became not so much a hope as an irrevocable determination. However he might dissemble, he had closer to his heart than anything else the project of overcoming Protestantism by force of arms and restoring to Germany at once religious unity and real imperial authority.

Still, as he was not yet prepared for war, he did dissemble for some years and apparently lent himself in good faith to the various attempts that were made to find some terms of workable compromise before appealing to the sword. On the Protestant side, Melanchthon was as sanguine as ever that something might yet be accomplished. At the Diet of Worms, January, 1541, he had a long colloquy with his old opponent Eck, but no agreement could be reached.[2] The debate centered chiefly on the doctrine of original sin, and Melanchthon showed far greater knowledge of the Scripture, while Eck as always surpassed in dialectic skill. At one point in the debate, Eck advanced an argument that was new to Melanchthon, and he promised an answer the next day, after he had opportunity to reflect on it. Eck said tauntingly, "Oh, there is no honor in that, if you cannot answer me immediately." To which Melanchthon made the dignified and worthy rejoinder, "My good Doctor, I am not seeking my own glory in this cause, but truth. I say then, God willing, you shall have an answer to-morrow."

The colloquy was adjourned to Regensberg the following April, and this was perhaps the most important of all the attempts to bring about a better understanding between Catholics and Protestants. The Emperor

[1] For these Protestant aggressions see Seckendorf, 3: 435 *seq.*; Spalatin, *Annales*, 683.

[2] A large collection of documents regarding the Worms Colloquy in Walch, 17: 388–555. See also, Moses, *Die Religionsverhandlungen zu Hagenau und Worms*, 1540 *und* 1541. Jena, 1899.

himself interposed and seemingly did his best to make something practical come out of it. Contarini, the most liberal of Catholics, represented his party. Not only Melanchthon but Bucer and Calvin were invited and came; and this was the beginning of a friendship between Calvin and Melanchthon that endured as long as their lives. As a result of the debate here, agreement was reached on the statement of certain doctrines: Justification, freedom of man, original sin, baptism, good works and episcopacy.[1] But further progress proved again impossible. Melanchthon stood by the doctrine of his Confession, and with unexpected spirit declared that he would rather die than yield anything against his conscience. He had at last been brought to see that the differences between Protestants and Catholics were irreconcilable by any ingenuity of dubious and circumlocutory phrases. Yet this was the time for accomplishment, if ever. The Emperor and the Roman Curia were in a more conciliatory mood than they had ever been before or would ever be again. They made no inconsiderable concessions, and condescended to argue points about which they had previously spoken but the one word, "Submit." Had the same spirit of conciliation and discussion of differences been shown back in 1520, there might have been a far different history to record. But the new spirit came too late; matters had now reached a point where compromise was out of the question.

While the conferences were in progress, Philip of Hesse made a secret compact with the Emperor, in which he engaged to do all in his power to secure an agreement, and henceforth to support the Emperor's cause; to recognize Ferdinand as Emperor after the death of Charles; and to contract no alliance with France, England, or other foreign powers, or permit foreign potentates to be admitted into the Schmalkald League. In return Charles took the Landgrave "into his special favor, friendship and protection," and granted pardon "for all his past proceedings," which of course included his bigamy with many other offenses. The Emperor hoped by this course to weaken the Schmalkald League and gain a strong ally for himself from the Protestant princes of Germany. It was a bad stroke of policy, for it freed Philip from all fear of consequences for his bigamy, and gave him full scope to plot any political treachery he might please.

One last attempt was made to avert the impending war. The Diet at Speyer in 1544 passed a recess, in spite of the Catholic opposition, that promised something. It extended the Peace of Nürnberg, and declared that nothing could settle the questions in dispute but the hold-

[1] Walch, 17: 556–1405. This is known in Reformation literature as the "Regensburg book." See on this colloquy, Vetter, *Die Religionsverhandlungen auf dem Reichstage zu Regensburg*, 1541. Jena, 1889.

ing of a general, free Christian Council of the German nation.[1] Both parties were to present plans of reform at the next Diet at Worms, and a friendly agreement should again be attempted on this basis. The Pope was highly indignant, and in a brief to the Emperor declared that "a host of evil spirits, actuated by hatred against the Roman Church, must have led the Emperor thus grossly astray at Speyer; by this recess Charles has jeoparded his own soul and introduced confusion into the Church."[2] But Charles was not disturbed by this censure; he would no doubt have been glad to restore peace and unity to Germany without a war, if such a thing had been possible; and the matter was duly taken up at Worms, early in 1545. Melanchthon and other of the Wittenberg theologians had prepared a new and temperate treatise on the principles of reform, called the *Wittenbergische Reformation.*[3] It insisted on pure evangelical doctrine as a prime necessity, but made considerable concessions in matters of ritual and discipline, particularly as to the authority of bishops. Another conference at Regensburg was proposed by the Emperor, but nothing came of it—nothing could come of it.[4] Charles was quite as slow as Melanchthon to learn that the differences between Catholics and Protestants were fundamental and irreconcilable.

Luther had from the first been opposed to the employment of force, even in self-defense. This was no hastily adopted and ill-considered theory with him, but a deliberate judgment by which he was ready to stand, no matter what the consequences to himself. For many years he steadfastly resisted every inducement to modify this opinion; the only exception that he made was in the case of rulers, who were charged by God with the duty of protecting their subjects, and might use force for that purpose. But even a ruler owed obedience to the Emperor and might not resist him, any more than a peasant might resist his prince. As for the Emperor, the only limitation on his power was the obligation to use it lawfully. In 1523 the Wittenberg theologians gave an opinion, or rather a series of opinions, on this subject in which they set forth their doctrine thus:

[1] Walch, 17: 956 *seq.*

[2] It was this papal citation that led Luther to write one of his most violent tracts against the Papacy: *Wider das Papstthums, so zu Rom von Teufel gestiftet,* Wittenberg, 1545; LDS, 26: 108–228; Walch, 17: 1019 *seq.* Köstlin calls this Luther's "last great witness against the Papacy." The quality of this "witness" may be inferred from a single choice extract: "Therefore he [the Pope] should be seized, he and his Cardinals, and all the scoundrelly crew of his Holiness, and their tongues should be torn from their throats and nailed in a row on the gallows tree, in like manner as they affix their seals in a row to their bulls, though even this would be but slight punishment for all their blasphemy and idolatry. Afterwards let them hold a council, or whatever they please, on the gallows, or in hell with all the demons."

[3] Walch, 17: 1133 *seq.*; C. R., 5: 577 *seq.*

[4] Sleidan, 358, 359.

> We conclude that it is the duty of every prince to protect Christians, and the proper external worship of God, against all unlawful violence, just as in civil matters it is the duty of a prince to protect a pious subject against unjust violence. Much more is this duty incumbent on princes, since the Scriptures often enjoin upon princes the protection of lawful preachers and teachers. . . . There is no difference between a secret murderer and the Emperor, when the latter proposes unlawful violence beyond his jurisdiction, and especially unlawful violence in public matters.

Though it would be a valid inference that princes might and should resist the Emperor if he invaded their religious rights, or those of their subjects, Luther and his colleagues were careful not to draw this inference in so many words. It was not until 1545 that they formally approved the Schmalkald League and a defensive war of religion in case the Emperor attacked the Protestants.[1]

On September 18, 1544, an event occurred that was indirectly decisive regarding the course of affairs in Germany. Charles then succeeded in concluding a comparatively firm and lasting treaty with his dearest foe, Francis I, known as the Peace of Crespy. A year later he made a truce with the Turks that freed Europe from the dangers so long threatening from that quarter. Several times in previous years the hostility of the Turks had saved the Protestant party when in imminent peril, but no further diversions of that kind were now possible. More than once before this, Charles had seemed to be free to devote his attention exclusively to German affairs and employ all his resources in behalf of the Roman Church, but his freedom had in every case proved to be illusory. Now for the first time he was really free, and the remaining ten years of his reign were devoted to a consistent and determined attempt to restore the imperial authority and suppress the Protestant faith in Germany.

Just as the storm was to break, the Protestant cause suffered a great loss. Martin Luther, the man who began the Reformation and had remained the soul of the revolt against Rome, died after a few hours' illness in the town of Eisleben, where he was born, February 18, 1546, in his sixty-third year. He was easily the greatest man of his age, great alike in his faults and in his virtues. It was a greatness of character, of personality. Luther bestrode Europe like a colossus, dwarfing all men of his time, because of what he was, while Charles V played a great part in the history of the age mainly because of what he had inherited. We have outgrown Carlyle's "great man" theory of history, but it is still mankind's unconscious tribute to the greatness of Luther that, though in reality but a chip upon the current of events, he so stamped his personality

[1] LDS, 65: 83–86.

on the men of his time and has so dominated the imagination of generations following, most men still think and speak of him as the creator of the Reformation. Luther was elemental, genuine, abundant in vitality, intensely human in both his merits and his failings. Some see in him only a bundle of contradictions; certainly he was not a man of unpardonable virtues. He was brave, but seldom chivalrous, too much the man of action to care whether he were consistent. In early life an extreme ascetic, after he left the monastery he took special pains to throw off former restraints and became joyous and even self-indulgent. If in his later years he had been called "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber" it would hardly have been a slander. The strain of peasant coarseness was never eradicated from his nature by culture, and his manners left much to be desired. Nevertheless, there is force in Heine's celebrated saying—"The polish of Erasmus, the benignity of Melanchthon, would never have brought us so far as the divine brutality of brother Martin." Even so, we may append our footnote to the effect that the brutality is far oftener in evidence than the divinity.

Democracy means a free man in a free society, and Luther made one of the greatest contributions of all time to this end. Yet even here we cannot forget that after his heroic stand at Worms he soon began to show a fundamental distrust of all that he had previously taught, and spent the best years of his life in a vain attempt to limit the development of his own principles. Twentieth-century standards must not be used to measure this marvel of the sixteenth. After all, the chief fact to remember is the intensity of his religious experiences and his marvelous power of communicating them to others. His natural and unaffected piety, his unfaltering trust in God, his joyous courage in the midst of manifold dangers, his typical German spirit, gave him a hold on the affection and imagination of the German nation that he never lost. He is admired by Catholics who deplore the Reformation, and can see in it only

> Millions of spirits for his fault amerced
> Of Heaven, and from eternal splendors flung
> For his revolt.

As with every man of genius there is something in Luther that does not yield to analysis—the whole is greater than the sum of all its parts. Not a great scholar, not a great poet, not a great orator, hardly a great man of letters, he was a great man—he was the great man of the German people.

At the Diet of Regensburg (1546) a request by the Protestants for the renewal of the Peace of Nürnberg was scornfully rejected, and Charles began gathering an army. Sentence of outlawry was pronounced upon

the leaders of the Schmalkald League July 20th,[1] and the Protestants at once began to prepare for defense. War had come at last. Still, either trusting the Emperor's deceitful professions that he had no hostile intentions, or relying too greatly on their military strength, the Protestants neglected the one obvious precaution that would have secured them from invasion, the occupying of the Alpine passes with even a small force. When his purpose could no longer be concealed, Charles was profuse in protestations that he waged war for political purposes, not religious. In a letter addressed to the cities of Strassburg, Nürnberg and Ulm, June 16, 1546, he said that certain disturbers of peace and justice had for a long time availed themselves of the Christian religion as a mantle for unlawful attempts to subjugate the other Estates of the Empire. Now they proclaimed that they intended to raise the sword against the Emperor. He had accordingly resolved to punish these disobedient and refractory subjects and reëstablish the German nation in peace and unity.[2] There was much truth in the Emperor's way of putting the case against the Protestants, but he disclosed his real purpose in a letter to his son, August 10th: "My aim and object was and is to prosecute this war for the restoration of the Catholic religion. I nevertheless caused it to be announced and proclaimed, because this course seemed advisable at first, that my motive was to punish my refractory subjects, above all those of Hesse and Saxony."[3]

When the forces took the field, everything looked favorable for the Protestant cause. They had an army of 47,000 men, considerably outnumbering any force the Emperor was able to arm and equip, and they had some advantage of position. But this force of theirs was not a compact army; it was composed of numerous independent detachments, and there was no concert of action, rather mutual jealousies and dissensions that paralyzed effort. The Emperor was not crushed at once, as good military policy dictated, but given time to collect reinforcements. The delay not only increased their opponent's strength but weakened their own, as the delay in giving battle and deciding the issue crippled the financial resources of the allies.

On the eve of the real campaign, there was a defection from the Protestant forces that proved fatal. Duke Moritz, of Saxony, though a Protestant, had not joined the Schmalkald League, and was well known to be ill-affected toward his cousin, Elector John Frederick. Still his aid

[1] Walch, 17: 1470. Cf. Sleidan, 389, and Raynaldus, 1546, No. 109. At the same time he concluded a secret treaty with the Pope for the suppression of Protestantism. Original in Raynaldus, 1546, No. 94; cf. Sleidan, 381, and Richards' "Melanchthon," 314, 315.

[2] Janssen, 6: 314.

[3] Maurenbrecher, "Karl V," Appendix, p. 47. Cf. Armstrong, "Charles V," 2: 132.

was confidently expected by the League; at the least his neutrality was assumed. He had, however, concluded a secret treaty with the Emperor, by which he secured his own religious liberty, and the promise of other favors, on condition of supporting Charles against the League. At the critical moment, just as Charles was ready to march into Germany, Moritz invaded Electoral Saxony. The Elector hastened to the defense of his domains, which he easily regained, but he thereby left the allied forces too weak to resist the Emperor's advance, and was himself defeated at Mühlberg by the imperial army and made a prisoner of war, April 24, 1547. This crushing reverse took the heart out of the other princes, and one by one they offered apology and submission to the Emperor. The powerful Schmalkald League was annihilated at a blow, and Charles V was undisputed master of Germany.

CHAPTER IV

THE PEACE OF AUGSBURG

CHARLES V was victor at Mühlberg, but his triumph was more seeming than real. Germany was by no means conquered; its military power was not seriously impaired, while the Emperor, in spite of appearances, was nearly at the end of his resources. All that Germany needed was a competent leader, but this was just what she lacked. Henry II, who had recently succeeded Francis I, had inherited his father's hatred of Charles, and was much enraged by the imperial triumph. He sent a contingent of landsknechts and cavalry to the aid of the Protestants and promised them a large sum of money. There was even a prospect that France would declare war against the Emperor. But Germany, instead of resisting, abjectly surrendered; the princes had no stomach for further resistance. John Frederick assented to whatever terms the Emperor chose to impose, giving up his electoral dignity to Moritz, together with most of his territory, Moritz guaranteeing 50,000 florins a year to the former Elector's children. He even accepted the ambiguous demand that he should remain at the Emperor's court so long as it should please his Majesty, which in 1550 Charles interpreted to mean captivity for life.

Had the "Magnanimous" Philip of Hesse been anything more than a whining coward in this emergency, the Protestant forces might have been rallied and the imperial army been driven out of Germany. As it was, his one thought seems to have been how be might make the best possible terms for himself. He opened negotiations with the Emperor through Moritz and the Elector of Brandenburg. Charles sent a demand that he should surrender *in Gnade und Ungnade* (in favor and disfavor, i.e., unconditionally) but Philip struck out the words *und Ungnade* with his own hand and refused surrender unless this concession were granted him.[1] The Emperor insisted on retaining the words, but gave the mediators his personal pledge that this should not lead to corporal punishment or perpetual imprisonment. That this pledge was given, and that it was insincere, is proved by a letter of his to Ferdinand—"It is true that the two electors demanded my assurance that I would not allow Philip to be punished corporally, or by perpetual imprisonment; they used the

[1] The treaty, in twenty-four articles, is given by Mogen in *Historia Captivitatis magnanimi Hessiae Landgravii*, Leipzig, 1766, pp. 382–396. For the *Gnad und Ungnad* clause, see same, p. 59 *seq.*

term 'perpetual,' and they also promised that the word should be used in the document presented to me. I agreed to this demand, but I nevertheless think it advisable to retain the Landgrave in my hands, at least for a time longer, and to make a prisoner of him when he arrives; and the Electors will not be able to complain on that score, for I shall be doing nothing contrary to the promise I made 'not to subject him to perpetual imprisonment.'"[1]

When therefore Philip presented himself before the Emperor at Halle, June 19th, to sue for pardon, the Emperor received him coldly, refusing to extend to him the hand of forgiveness. It is said that when he rose from his knees, Philip had a smile on his lips, and that Charles lifted a threatening finger and said, "Wait, wait, and I will teach you how to laugh." The prince was informed that he would be detained in captivity, and on the mediators protesting that they had understood this would not be the case, and that they had so informed Philip in his name, Charles had but to point them to the terms of the surrender. The Emperor was indeed keeping the letter of his agreement, though doubtless violating what he had made the mediators believe was its spirit. The princes finally admitted that the Emperor "was entitled to retain the Landgrave in captivity, but that his imprisonment must not be perpetual."

The dominance that Charles thus obtained in Germany was not less complete because so little deserved. He had to thank the weakness of his enemies rather than his own prowess, but he had none save himself to thank for his failure to profit by his great opportunity. All through life fortune was delivering his enemies into his hands; but now, as after Pavia and the sack of Rome, he could gain less from victory than a really great leader like William of Orange could wring from defeat. Perhaps he quickly discovered the unconquered spirit of Germany, and felt that

> "who overcomes
> By force, hath overcome but half his foe."

At all events, Germany was surprised to find the Emperor behaving less like a conqueror than as one who negotiates with an adversary on equal terms. It is said that after the surrender of Wittenberg he and his staff visited the tomb of Luther in the castle church, and the Duke of Alba advised him to have the arch-heretic's bones dug up and burned; to which Charles made the noble reply, "I war with the living, not with the dead." This would be very gratifying, if one could but assure himself that it ever happened, and that it represents the Emperor's real mind. That his policy was pacific there can be no question. Only those who had been

[1] Janssen, VI: 371. Sleidan's account, excellent in the main, seems to betray ignorance of the more vital documents. 430 *seq.*; cf. Armstrong, "Charles V," 2: 155, 156.

in actual rebellion were punished, and only the leaders at that; of immediate severity against the Protestants as such there was no sign. And except Moritz,[1] none of his supporters received rewards at the expense of others.

There is one hypothesis on which this course of Charles may be explained: he was again using Germany as a pawn on the great chessboard of European politics, where his game had assumed a new phase during the war. An open rupture had again occurred between Emperor and Pope. After many delays, the long promised Council had actually met at Trent, December 13, 1545. In 1546 decrees were passed concerning the canonical Scriptures, original sin and justification. The decree on the Scriptures was particularly objectionable to the Protestants, in that it received the apocryphal books of the Jews as part of the canon, demanded that tradition should be received as of equal weight with Scripture, and that the Vulgate should be read in the churches and esteemed authentic and canonical equally with the original Greek and Hebrew. The decree on justification made that doctrine include sanctification and inextricably confused the two; asserted the instrumental cause of justification to be, not faith, but baptism, the sacrament of faith; and anathematized all who "say that by faith alone the sinner is justified," or that "justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake." In March, 1547, the general doctrine of the sacraments was defined, together with the special doctrines of baptism and confirmation. To these the Lutherans took less exception.

Charles protested against these acts of the council, first, on the ground that the body was too exclusively Italian for its decisions to be ecumenical and binding; and again, that the decree on justification was not in accord with the agreement at Regensburg, to which papal legates had assented. While this dispute was pending, several members of the council sickened, and under pretext that a contagious disease was prevalent at Trent the Pope adjourned the council on March 14th to Bologna. Angry communications now passed between the Emperor and the Pope. Charles commanded the imperialist bishops to remain at Trent and was obeyed; he insisted that the Pope should summon the council to reassemble at Trent and was refused. The Pope on his part insisted that the recalcitrant bishops must come to Bologna as a condition precedent to further action, and Charles would not trust him so far.[2] We may conclude with great probability that the Pope was as much alarmed as the Protestants by the predominance of the Emperor, and that this was the real cause

[1] The Duke was invested with the promised Electoral dignity, with elaborate ceremonies and a great military display. Sleidan, 457.

[2] Documents in Raynaldus, 1547, No. 88, and 1548, nos. 6 and 19.

of the removal of the council to Bologna, at which greater distance it would be less exposed to the danger of imperial interference and more under papal control.

It was under such circumstances that Charles summoned the Diet which met at Augsburg September 1, 1547. The quarrel with the Pope had greatly moderated the zeal of the Emperor against the Protestants; he was now in no mood to restore Catholicism with the strong hand and the outstretched arm. A few things he did insist on, more because he was personally concerned about them than for any other reason. He deposed Archbishop Hermann, of Cologne, and saw him replaced with a good Catholic—this was necessary to maintain the Catholic majority in the Electoral College. He put Julius von Pflug into his See of Naumberg, which the Lutherans had occupied, because his authority had been defied in that case. Beyond such things he did not go; he was deeply displeased with Paul III and the council, because, instead of beginning a reformation of the Church, they had devoted themselves chiefly to condemning the doctrines of the Protestants. By this course they had made his self-imposed task of pacifying Germany the more difficult. Charles was now returning to his old delusion, from which he had been for a time freed, that a reunion of Protestants and Catholics in a consolidated Germany was still possible.

As a result of such cogitations, the tone of the Emperor at the Diet was unexpectedly moderate. It was, some of them whispered, as if there had been no Schmalkald war. Except that the two chief Protestant princes were in confinement and disgrace, affairs were really much as they had been before. The speech from the throne declared that settlement of the religious difficulties was the first and most important business before the Diet. Accordingly, it was attacked energetically. Bishop Julius von Pflug and Michael Helding, suffragan bishop of Mainz, representing the Catholics, and John Agricola, court preacher of electoral Brandenburg, were appointed to draw up a workable compromise. The result of their labors differed in no material way from the Regensburg agreement which had come to nothing; and this new draft became known as the Augsburg Interim. After its preparation, Joachim II of Brandenburg, was persuaded to introduce it in the Diet and become its sponsor. It is said that this prince had completely exhausted his money in carousing and gambling, and was at his wit's end (no long distance) to provide for his expenses; so that the offer by a Catholic prelate of a timely loan was the inducement that led him thus practically to abjure his Protestantism. Be this as it may, his complaisance and his subsequent attempts to persuade the Brandenburg preachers to accept the Interim, won from his appreciative subjects the name of "Fat Old Interim."

The Interim[1] is a long document in twenty-six chapters, which may be compendiously described as an attempt to combine Protestant doctrine and Catholic practice. Articles iv, v and vi on justification, while far from fully satisfying Protestants, were ambiguous enough to permit them to continue preaching their doctrine, while they came far short of the uncompromising rejection of Protestant doctrine found in the canons of Trent. Article vii on "Love and good works" was equally ambiguous. On the other hand, articles xiv-xxvi not only gave the Catholic doctrine of Church and Sacraments entire and without modification, but insisted as well on all the Catholic usages, festivals and fasts. Only two points of discipline were conceded to the Protestants: the marriage of priests and communion in both kinds. The articles also recognized the authority of the bishops, and gave a qualified recognition of the Pope's jurisdiction. It was, on the whole, much such a compromise as Melanchthon had favored more than once before, and notably in his letter to Cardinal Campeggio at the Diet of Augsburg, in 1530. As this new ecclesiastical constitution was avowedly only temporary and provisional in character, until the council then in session should have given a final decision concerning all disputed questions in religion, there was less ground for objection than if it had been put forth as a final settlement. It was passed by the Diet and proclaimed by the Emperor as the law of the Empire, May 15, 1548.

Charles soon found that his rôle of peacemaker was a thankless task. Though the Archbishop of Mainz publicly thanked him, in the name of all the estates, this did not prevent his private disapproval of the whole measure. He afterwards withdrew his public words, and with his fellow prelates of Cologne and Trier protested against the Interim, especially the concession to the Protestants of the lay chalice and clerical marriage. The Protestants were even more dissatisfied. Duke Moritz was so displeased that he withdrew from the Diet. John Frederick protested from his prison. The Margrave of Brandenburg flatly refused to accept it or to have it executed in his dominions. But though thus buffeted on both sides—the Catholics regarding the Interim as an ill-advised compromise, and the Protestants declaring it to be the work of the devil—Charles continued to enforce his plan, to the best of his power, but was able to do so only wherever he and his troops were actually present; elsewhere a stubborn passive resistance was opposed, that was measurably successful. The strongest opposition came from the towns, which were once more the saviors of the Reformation. In South Germany their opposition was ruthlessly overborne. The preachers of Ulm, who advised the

[1] A very full abstract in German, with many verbatim quotations, is given in Gieseler, 4: 194, 195. Latin text in Kidd, 359–362. Summary in English in Sleidan, 458, 459, and complete text in Calvin's "Tracts," 3: 190–239 (Calvin Translation Society, Edinburgh, 1861).

citizens to resist, were thrown into prison; and Constance for a time lost its freedom. Northern Germany fared better; Magdeburg was the center of disaffection and resistance. The press teemed with squibs and satires, in which Charles and his edict were held up to ridicule, and no prohibitions or penalties availed to disarm the people of this terrible weapon. It is little exaggeration to say that the Interim was eventually laughed out of existence.[1]

The Pope, on his part, bitterly resented this imperial and secular interference (as he regarded it) with his own prerogatives,[2] but he was not ready for a total break with the arbiter of Europe, and reluctantly acceded to the demand of Charles that dispensations should be granted the Protestants in the two breaches of Catholic discipline provided by the Interim. He sent delegates to whom he secretly gave full powers, but with urgent instructions to conceal these powers and delay action as long as possible.[3]

Duke Moritz, on his return home from the Diet, called together a number of his theologians, of whom Melanchthon was the best known, and took counsel with them. He was very averse to accepting and executing the Augsburg Interim in his domains, but was not prepared for open disobedience to Emperor and Diet. The only possible alternative was to propose some modifications in the document, which should make it more acceptable to the Protestants, yet not obnoxious to the Emperor. It was by no means an easy task, and his success was only partial. A former composition of Melanchthon's on justification, stating the doctrine in a much more clear and evangelical form than was done in the Interim, was taken as the basis; otherwise the Augsburg document was closely followed —so closely, in fact, as to concede confirmation, episcopal ordination and extreme unction as sacraments; fasts (as things commanded by the Emperor and not contrary to the gospel), processions, use of images in the churches, and practically the full celebration of the mass. On December 21, 1548 this was proclaimed and was known as the Leipzig Interim.[4]

There is no question that both Melanchthon and Moritz were actuated by their fears more than by their judgment in the preparation of this document. Neither of them had the spirit of martyrs. Melanchthon justified himself by the prospect that refusal would mean the deprivation

[1] Janssen, 6: 418. On the severe treatment of Ulm and other cities, see Sleidan, 472 *seq.*, 517, etc.

[2] The letter of admonition written by Paul III to Charles V is to be found in an English version, together with elaborate comments by Calvin, in Calvin's "Tracts," 1: 212 *seq.*

[3] Raynaldus, 1548, No. 72.

[4] CR, 7: 259 *seq.* The first draft is given in pp. 48–62. Eng. tr. Jacobs, "Concord," 2: 260 *seq.*

of the clergy on a large scale,[1] and the plunder of the churches; and by the further plea that, as liberty to preach the gospel would be saved, ceremonies and the like were *adiaphora* or matters of indifference, that might be observed without injury to the divine Scripture. But he included many things under *adiaphora* that were vitally connected with sound evangelical theology, and he even stated some of the evangelical doctrines in terms so ambiguous, that he seemed to all but his intimate friends to have become a traitor to the Reformation. And accordingly, there broke out a bitter combat, known as the adiaphoristic controversy, the first of a series of dissensions arising from Melanchthon's teachings, which divided the Lutherans into bitterly hostile groups.

There was another and deeper cause for this division among the Lutherans than mere dissatisfaction with Melanchthon's teachings. He had succeeded, by force of circumstances, to a leadership for which he was in no way fitted. So long as Luther survived, his imperious will and vitriolic pen had kept everybody else in docile subjection. After his death a number of ambitious theologians, whose desire far outran performance, were ready to challenge the authority of Melanchthon and make their bids for leadership. It is not to be denied that his party had a real grievance against their new leader, and a few years later he confessed that he had gone too far in granting concessions; yet it was no deliberate treachery of which he had been guilty, but inherent weakness of character. He had now yielded, in the chief crisis of his life, to that inveterate tendency to compromise, to the verge of giving up all that was worth retaining, from which Luther's firmness had saved him and the Protestant cause at Augsburg in 1530. But there was no stout-hearted Luther now at Melanchthon's side.

The Interim was not the only important measure of Charles at the Augsburg Diet. He also caused a scheme of reform to be drawn up and submitted to the German bishops, which provided for the removal of the abuses so bitterly mentioned in the Centum Gravamina and other documents of the time. He hoped by this means further to conciliate the Protestants on the one hand, and to bring such pressure to bear on the council as should insure efficient reform by that body. As matter of fact, many of the things that he demanded were done in the later canons of Trent, after Charles had passed off the European stage. The Emperor also attempted reforms in the constitution of the Empire, such as would strengthen his authority. The chief result was the establishment of an

[1] Melanchthon states as the result of the Augsburg Interim that "upwards of four hundred pastors in Swabia and the circles of the Rhine are driven from their stations. There is but a single minister at this moment at Tübingen who conforms to the book published at Augsburg; it has had the effect of driving away all the preachers and pastors." CR, 7: 299, 301.

imperial military treasury and a redistribution of taxation. The main burden of the new subsidies, notwithstanding their protests, fell on the cities. By this policy the Emperor cleverly contrived to give the towns both a political and a religious grievance, and provoked them to a resistance that in the end could only be fatal to his ascendancy in Germany. It was clearly his policy to gain the support of the towns against the princes if he would increase the imperial power at the expense of the oligarchy.

From his deadlock with the Pope, Charles was released by the death of Paul III, November 10, 1549. Julius III, who succeeded, had as cardinal been an adroit and consistent anti-imperialist; but as Pope he saw the importance of coming to terms with the Emperor. He turned from Henry II and sought close relations with Charles, inviting the Emperor to preside in person at the reopening of the council, which he summoned to meet again at Trent, May 1, 1551. This reconciliation seemed to bode ill for the Protestants and to foreshadow their complete submission. Elector Joachim, in order to secure confirmation of his son as Archbishop of Magdeburg (he was already bishop of Hildesheim) offered to submit to the council. It was arranged that the Protestant states should send representatives to Trent, and though Melanchthon drew up another confession, more Protestant than the Leipzig Interim,[1] little was hoped as a result of their appeal. It was the darkest hour of Protestantism.

Though a show had been made, as we have seen, of enforcing the Augsburg Interim, it more and more became a dead letter. It accomplished one thing, however, with a thoroughness that perhaps nobody had foreseen: the complete and final alienation of Germany from Charles V. He had owed his election to the patriotic preference of Germans for a German to be their ruler, rather than a Frenchman or an Englishman. But Charles was not a German; he was a Spaniard in every drop of his blood; he never understood Germany in the least, and he now lost the last remnants of German respect and esteem. Henceforth he and Germany could be nothing but bitter foes. He and his Spanish garrisons were alike hated; his prestige in Europe began to decline; the essential weakness of his position was better appreciated; until finally the temptation to attack him grew too strong to be resisted by one restless and ambitious man, at least.

Duke Moritz had profited all that he could by his first treachery; he had betrayed his fellow-Protestants to the Emperor for a price, by no

[1] May, 1551, the *Confessio Saxonica*, CR, 27: 327 *seq.* The Latin text is followed by Major's translation into German, p. 370 *seq.* This is called "a repetition and exposition of the Augsburg Confession," but it is rather an adaptation of the confession of Augsburg to the changed circumstances. It was signed, not by the princes, but by the theologians: Bugenhagen, Pfeffinger, Camerarius, Major, Eber, Melanchthon, and the Superintendents of Electoral Saxony. See letter of Melanchthon to Prince George, of Anhalt, July 11, 1551, in CR, 7: 806.

means high enough to satisfy him; he was now ready for a second treachery by which the Emperor should be betrayed to his fellow-Protestants. This is the surface reading of the facts, and it is yet uncertain whether they have any other significance than lies on the surface. It may be conceded that the character of Moritz is a puzzle not solved, but those who maintain that he had all along a deep design of making the Protestant cause triumphant have not clearly made out their case.[1] Disappointment that his reward and honor had not been greater may first have led him to think of deserting Charles; ambition to become the arbiter of Germany was probably a motive not less strong; he no doubt thought he saw his way clear to great emoluments and honors through his new policy. We may even grant some force to the excuse for his conduct that he himself gave: a desire to right the wrongs of his father-in-law, Landgrave Philip, who had been kept a close prisoner till now and some of the time had been treated with positive brutality.

Moritz concluded a secret alliance with Henry II, at the same time he was assuring the Emperor of his eternal fidelity, and simultaneously the allies took the field in March, 1552.[2] Charles had been repeatedly warned of the defection of Moritz, but would not believe it. His incredulity may have been in part affected—he felt that he could do nothing to punish the treason if Moritz were in truth a traitor, and to show suspicion would only precipitate the result. The real adversary of Charles at this time was poverty, and this was an invincible foe. The Emperor's power was a mere shell, an imposing falsehood. By his wars and extravagances he had completely exhausted both his resources and his credit. He had no money to pay his troops and they were tired of being paid with promises; they left his standard for their homes, or sought other service that held out better prospect of pay. Their hopes of beauty and booty as the result of a conquest of Germany had been disappointed—no rich towns had been given over to them to storm and sack.

When Moritz moved against Charles, therefore, there was no opposition. The Emperor was lying sick and discouraged at Innsbrück and narrowly escaped capture. One story represents him as carried away in a litter; another as hastily mounting a horse and riding away down the Brenner Pass, without books or papers, only a few minutes before the advance guard of Moritz entered his camp.[3] In any event, the greatest

[1] Langenn makes out the best case he can for Moritz, which is not saying much, and lays great stress on the Emperor's treatment of the Landgrave of Hesse. *Moritz, Herzog und Churfürst zu Sachsen.* 2 vols. Leipzig, 1841, 1: 306–311, 503–527.

[2] Sleidan, 549; on Moritz's intercession with the Emperor for the Landgrave, and his decision for war when he received only vague and procrastinating replies; see same, 531–534.

[3] It may be shrewdly suspected that Moritz advanced slowly, and was not anxious to capture the Emperor. When informed that Charles had escaped, he is said to have remarked, "I have no cage for such a bird." Langenn, 1: 529.

monarch of Europe fled out of Germany like a whipped dog, and never again attempted to return. His ambitious plans had totally miscarried. Germany was once more free and Protestantism was saved. In the long contest between monarchy and oligarchy, oligarchy had won out with a lasting victory.

For it speedily became evident that this was an irreparable disaster to Charles. The Turks seized this opportunity to begin a new invasion, and the Emperor, pressed on every side, was compelled to make the best terms possible with the Protestant Estates. By the Peace of Passau, August 2, 1552, he agreed to release his captive princes, Philip and John Frederick, and that a settlement of the religious and political affairs of Germany should be made by the Diet of the Empire. This was equivalent, in the circumstances, to a relinquishment of his attempt to increase the imperial power, and his final acceptance of the constitution of the Empire as it stood. It was not until 1555 that the Diet was able to meet and perform the duty thus imposed upon it. After long deliberation, a recess was passed, called a "perpetual treaty of peace," which has been known since that time as the Peace of Augsburg. Charles could not bring himself to be present at these negotiations and submit to the personal humiliation of seeing all that he had struggled to accomplish during his reign formally annihilated; he therefore made his brother Ferdinand his deputy with full powers, and the latter gave the imperial assent to the recess. That the Estates thus amicably settled their long-standing differences for themselves, with absolutely no thought of the wishes of Charles or respect for his authority, of itself testifies to the fact that the Emperor must henceforth be regarded as without power or even influence in the so-called Empire. The Diet is henceforth the center of unity and authority, and the princes control the Diet. It is a pleasure to add that Duke Moritz had not lived to see this day of triumph or to reap the fruits of his second treachery. On July 9, 1553, he fell in battle, in a war that he had begun with the Margrave Albert, of Brandenburg, a former boon-companion with whom he had fallen out.

The Peace[1] was declared in its preamble to have as its object "to establish between the Estates of the Holy Empire a general, continuous and enduring peace in regard to the contending religions," and several times in the various articles the peace so established is described as "perpetual" and "eternal." It really did endure for a considerable time, since for sixty-three years there was no further open warfare between Protestant and Catholic. Then the strife burst forth more fiercely than ever, in the struggle known to history as the Thirty Years' War. And the

[1] For the full text of the Peace, see Appendix VII. The chief articles are given in Latin in Gieseler, 4: 207, and in English by Sleidan, 626.

reason for this renewal of strife then was that the Peace of Augsburg left unsettled some of the principal questions at issue, to be continual sources of misunderstanding and bickering, until mutual exasperation should produce another armed conflict.

The Peace did, however, provide for a sort of toleration of those who professed the faith of the Augsburg Confession—that is, it permitted each Estate to decide what should be its religion, and established as the law of the Empire the principle first encouraged by the Diet of Speyer, in 1526, *cujus regio, ejus religio*. There was thus made legal a territorial toleration of Lutheran by Catholic and Catholic by Lutheran—no more. Zwinglians and Calvinists, though becoming numerous, were granted no legal standing. Nor was there toleration offered within any State of such as differed from the religion established by law, whether of Protestants dissenting from the Catholic faith or Catholics dissenting from the Protestant faith. Each State was pledged by article iii to permit dissenting subjects to sell their lands and goods and remove to another State where their own religion was practiced, and this without hinderance or molestation. In the Peace itself there was no satisfactory guarantee that Catholic rulers would not persecute their Protestant subjects, but Archduke Ferdinand, as deputy of the Emperor, issued a supplementary declaration in his own name, giving the desired pledge. This was not, even at the time, regarded as having the same legal force as the recess of the Diet, and the Catholic States afterwards refused to hold themselves bound by it.

This "territorial" feature of the Peace secured the princely oligarchy in all their former powers and assumed privileges, including the exercise of episcopal jurisdiction, and so far seemed favorable to Protestantism. But it proved in the end a Trojan horse, and came near being the undoing of the Protestants. Since the government became thenceforth supreme in the realm of religion, the old Church had only to recapture the government in the Protestant states. This became the great objective of the Jesuits, who managed to insinuate themselves as tutors or instructors into many of the princely families, and to induce others to send their sons to the Jesuit schools for training. As a result of such tactics, in the course of a few generations a number of the ruling families of Germany were won back to Catholicism. Even Saxony, in the end, succumbed, its Duke being unable to resist the glittering bribe of the crown of Poland, and abjuring his Protestantism in order to gain it. But he was unable to reverse the religion of his duchy (since become a kingdom), and to this day an overwhelming majority of the people have remained faithful to the Protestant doctrine of their fathers while the reigning house of Saxony is Catholic.

One matter about which there was long and fierce difference of opinion in the Diet was the restitution of the confiscated property of the Church. This was the one thing that the Protestants were determined never to yield; they would have fought a new war first. The utmost in the way of compromise to which they would consent was to make the year 1552 and the treaty of Passau the norm, and cause all things to be restored to their condition at that time. Property expropriated since then was to be restored; all else was to be retained; and to this the Catholics finally gave a most reluctant consent. The courts were forbidden to entertain any process contrary to this agreement. This of course satisfied neither party, and each accused the other in subsequent years of violating the agreement. There was but too much ground for such accusations. If we may judge both parties by their later acts, neither had any serious purpose of abiding by the terms of the treaty; but each fully intended to take whatever advantage came its way, in years to come as they had in years past.

But perhaps the chief bone of contention was the spiritual Estates, those Sees that were free cities or principalities of the Empire, like Mainz, Cologne, Magdeburg. Article vi provided that when such a prelate should abandon his Catholic faith he should resign his See, and the chapter should at once elect another of the old religion. The Protestants opposed the article vigorously, and were with great difficulty persuaded by Ferdinand to give it their assent. Their subsequent conduct clearly showed, as the Catholics charged, that they did not assent in good faith, but with a mental reservation which permitted them thereafter to seize every opportunity for secularizing such Sees and adding them to the Protestant party. In this way the archbishoprics of Magdeburg and Bremen, and twelve bishoprics, were secularized one by one; and an attempt was made in 1583 to make the archbishopric of Cologne Lutheran, the incumbent having turned Protestant. The attempt failed, and a member of the Bavarian ducal family was installed in his place, but the Catholics were naturally both alarmed and enraged at this open violation of the Peace by the Protestants. Of course, the Catholic party was guilty of quite as indefensible breaches of the Peace, though of a somewhat different nature. But the fuller story of these details belongs to the preliminaries of the great final contest between Catholics and Protestants for supremacy in Germany, known as the Thirty Years' War.

A survey of these chief points of the Peace of Augsburg not only justifies, but compels, the conclusion that the famous document does not deserve its historic name. It was a mere crying of "peace" where there was no peace. It did not attempt to efface religious differences, but to establish a compromise, a *modus vivendi*. It was a "practical" measure,

not a theoretical solution, and attempted nothing more than a roughly just arrangement by which Protestants and Catholics should thenceforth be able to practice their respective religions without throat-cutting. It established a parity of parties and religions rather than equal rights for persons. The weakness of the Peace was that neither party really believed in it, either as a principle or as a working rule, but each conceded a part of its claim to the other as a matter of dire necessity. There was on both sides the hidden purpose, perhaps hardly acknowledged as yet to themselves, that as soon as either party was strong enough it would repudiate the Peace and either conquer its rival or be conquered.

The Peace was therefore rather the truce of two parties who were tired of fighting than the agreement of foes who intended henceforth to live together without fighting. It dodged and equivocated instead of definitely settling disputed issues. Above all, it is a mockery to describe this as the first public instrument that secured religious liberty. Religious liberty is an idea conspicuously absent from it—it does not even recognize toleration, save in the narrowest and most grudging form: the toleration of governments by each other, not the toleration of individuals by governments. It legalized the Erastian absolutism of the princes, probably the worst religious system the wit of man has yet been able to devise. It exchanged the spiritual despotism of the Church for that of the State; the Pope was replaced by the prince or town council. And one who presumed to dissent enjoyed no immunity under the new system. Before he had the remote prospect of being burned; now he had the imminent certainty of being fined, imprisoned or banished. The last state of Germany was worse than the first, for if the devil of popery had been cast out, the seven devils of sectarianism had taken his place.

It is quite unnecessary to say that the Peace was very distasteful to the Pope. Cardinal Caraffa had lately (May 23, 1555) been chosen pontiff, with the title of Paul IV—a stern, unbending Catholic, whose most comforting reflection on his bed of death was that he had done more than they all to revive and energize the Inquisition. While the Diet was in session he implored Ferdinand to dismiss the princes with everything unsettled, rather than accept the terms that the Protestants demanded. He seems to have thought it best, however, to make no public demonstration, and Rome was at this juncture spared such a blunder as that of his successor, Innocent X, who condemned and declared invalid the treaty of Westphalia,[1] by which the Thirty Years' War was brought

[1] In the bull *Zelo domus Dei*, dated November 26, 1648, but not actually published until the following January 3: *Praedictos utriusque pacis articulos, caeteraque in dictis instrumentis contenta, ipso jure nulla, invalida, injusta, damnata, omnino fuisse, esse et in perpetuo fore; neminemque ad illorum, etiamsi juramento vallata sint, observationem teneri, atque perinde ac si nunquam emanassent, pro non*

to a close. The comment of Raynaldus, the great Catholic historian, probably expresses in a pithy sentence the common opinion of Catholics: "By which decree Satan seemed to many to have impiously made an equal division of the German Empire with Christ."[1]

The immediate result of the Peace was not merely to restore Protestantism in Germany to the place it had held before the Schmalkald war, but to make possible a considerable advance. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that only the "ecclesiastical reservation" prevented the immediate completion of the Reformation throughout Germany. Though even that barrier was sometimes overleaped in the case of the less important Sees, the great principalities of the Rhine were held by the Church, as impregnable citadels of the old faith, and after a time these became the centers of a successful Catholic reaction. Two years after the conclusion of the Peace, an observer not likely to be unduly prejudiced in favor of Protestantism, the ambassador from Venice, wrote to his government that seven-tenths of Germany then belonged to the Lutherans, two-tenths to the Reformed or Calvinists, and only one-tenth to the Catholic Church.[2]

It should be not unprofitable now to ask ourselves what we have learned from our study of the German Reformation. Do the facts, as established by research and criticism, and set forth in the preceding chapters, justify any general conclusions, and if so, what are they?

First of all, we have seen that the Reformation was a complex movement, inspired by a variety of ideas and aims, social, political and religious. German writers have been fond of assuming, and sometimes of asserting, that only German peoples have the true, fervid sense of religion necessary to produce an urgent desire for reform. This will hardly account for the success of the German Reformation; for against this we must, in all candor, set certain facts: such as, that the earliest movements towards reform originated among the Latin nations; and furthermore, that the German Reformation really owed its success far less to religious fervor than to social ferment and political selfishness. In fact, to study the movement from any single point of view exclusively is to accumulate misinformation, not knowledge. The attempt has been made throughout this book to keep continually in mind all three elements of the struggle, and to give each its due prominence and no more. How successful this effort has been, is for those who read to pass judgment. They have missed, perhaps not without regret, the hero-worship and religious enthusiasm

extantibus et non factis perpetuo haberi debere, tenore earundem praesentium decernimus et declaramus. Et nihilominus ad abundatiorem cautelam, articulos praefatos aliaque praemissa, potestatis plenitudine penitus damnamus, reprobamus, cassamus, annullamus, viribusque et effectu vacuamus.

[1] Raynaldus, 1555, No. 50, 14: 570.

[2] Geffcken, "Church and State," 1: 317.

of other accounts, but may find themselves repaid by a closer approach to reality.

From one point of view the Reformation is an unspeakable religious conviction struggling to speak itself. Men had grown weary of a religion of forms and sacraments, of outward righteousness and inward depravity; weary of a religion that thrust the great body off into the outer courts of the temple, while priests corrupted by self-indulgence and vice claimed to minister on their behalf in holy things; weary of a religion that meant robbery and oppression in the name of God and demanded submission to its exactions on pain of eternal woe; weary of a religion that made thought a crime and the stultification of reason the highest virtue. Instead of this there was offered a religion that assured to every man right of immediate access to God and the forgiveness of sins, without the intervention of saint or sinner; a religion that directed him to the original sources of Christianity for the historic foundation of his faith, instead of later tradition and the uncertain speculations of the Fathers. It was a draught of living water to the thirsty, a breath of fresh air to those fainting in the desert, and was eagerly received. It is this side of the Reformation that has been most dwelt upon by Protestant writers, and the greater part of what they have said is justified by facts. Any study of the movement that overlooks or ignores this side of it will by just so much fall short of a truthful picture. Even the hero-worship is justified by facts—that is to say, by a part of the facts.

The leaders, and especially Luther, were men who had a genius for religion, and had been prepared for their work by a deep spiritual experience. The effect of his conflict of soul in the monastery never left Luther, and became deeply impressed upon the movement that he led. With all their faults,—and that they had many has been manifest as we have traced the course of events—the Reformers were men who feared God and served him according to their lights. To them religion was not one of the concerns of men, but the chief concern. They sought, on the whole consistently, a simpler faith and worship and a firmer trust in God, than the Catholic Church encouraged or even permitted. Their great defect was that, laying their emphasis chiefly on a right relation between man and God, they regarded as far less important a right relation between man and man. They comprehended and tried to obey the first great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind"; but they made little effort to obey, because they did not at all comprehend, the second commandment, which is like unto this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It is hardly to be expected, perhaps, that they should have recovered the understanding of the social teaching of Jesus, after fifteen centuries of

theological rubbish had so completely buried it from sight. Yet they cannot be held altogether guiltless for their failure, since their cardinal principle was the supremacy of the Scriptures. But the only part of the Scriptures that the reformers really understood or valued was the Pauline epistles; the rest they did not comprehend, and much of it Luther at least was quite ready to depreciate, and even to dispense with. The original Gospel they left a later age to discover and proclaim.

Yet we must not forget that, with the New Testament in their hands, which Luther himself had given them in their own tongue, little groups of Anabaptists did measurably succeed in recovering the teaching of Jesus and comprehending its human bearings. They revived the social ideals of primitive Christianity that had survived in Catholicism only in the monasteries, and there in a sadly perverted form. They saw clearly enough that a restoration of apostolic Christianity meant something more than modification of a few doctrines and ceremonies—that it involved the abolition of rank, recognition of the dignity and universal duty of productive labor, the simple life on the part of all, voluntary sharing of possessions with the more needy, and the fraternal spirit pervading all property rights as in early times. Existing society, they perceived, was so opposed to the mind of Christ, that no compromise with it was possible; no Christian man could hold office, take oaths, bear arms or pay taxes in such a state of society. Could these groups have made their voice heard, could they have won reception for this real Gospel of Jesus, the Reformation would have become a far different movement from that recorded in its documents. Three centuries of struggle and bloodshed and martyrdom would have been made unnecessary, and the world would have been by so much advanced further toward social justice than it stands to-day. The Anabaptists were silenced, trampled into the mud, destroyed; and the clock of civilization was set back three hundred years.[1]

A candid survey of the facts proves that the Reformation movement was quite as much political as religious. We might be glad as Protestants to believe that the new teachings made their way merely because they were true, and that they were gladly received by the people wherever restraints of law and force did not prevent, but the facts forbid us to lay that flattering unction to our souls. The religious revolution succeeded because, and just so far as, the German princes and the councils of the free cities for motives of their own—usually selfish and sordid reasons—

[1] One is tempted to sum up by saying, that the chief difference, after all is said, between Anabaptists and Lutherans of the sixteenth century is that the former failed while the latter succeeded; and, as the price of success, the Lutherans were compelled to deny their earlier revolutionary teachings and become the quiet and decorous party of "law and order."

took the matter in hand and promoted Lutheranism. The new doctrines might have prevailed in a fair field, by the inherent power of the truth; but in fact they prevailed nowhere, except the power of the State was invoked and secured. A majority of the States of the Empire found it to their interest, financial and political, first to protect Luther and finally to champion his reforms. Out of the hurly-burly of change and strife, these States contrived to acquire additional wealth and power through this policy. That was enough to stimulate their evangelical piety to an almost fanatical zeal. That any other interest than self-interest actuated most of them there is the slenderest proof, while evidences of greed and ambition fairly shout themselves at the student of all contemporary documents.

The constitutional struggle that had long been going on in Germany must be studied and understood by one who would duly weigh the motives of the princes to seize on any weapon that would avail them against their Emperor. In the light of such facts as lie on the very surface of the Reformation literature we may better estimate the appeal that Luther's new "gospel" made to them. Measured by its momentous and enduring effects, it is speaking temperately to declare that Luther's "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" was the greatest political pamphlet ever issued. If not the chief cause of a great revolution, as many think Rousseau's "Social Contract" to have been, it threw into the scale of a grave constitutional struggle a decisive weight, and brought about politico-religious conditions in Germany that remain practically unchanged to the present hour. The triumph of oligarchy has been a lasting one, and the prince who succeeded in establishing his preëminence among his fellows became in our own day, by virtue of that preëminence, Emperor of a new German Empire that now claims the hegemony of Europe.

But underlying and conditioning both the religious and the political phases of the Reformation were its economic and social causes. There had been since the Crusades a great revival of commerce and manufactures and a consequent rapid increase of wealth. The effect of this was seen in Europe on every side. The Reformation marks the dethronement of the ancient feudal aristocracy (the knights) and the beginning of the new aristocracy of capital. It was an aristocracy more intelligent and more virile, because less hampered by the principle of heredity, but it was also more ruthless. Nothing is sacred to an aristocracy of the moneyed class but gain. Its ethical standards were as much lower than the older as money is of less worth than a man. The old aristocracy, founded on the land, felt that they owed duties to the land and their tenants; the new aristocracy acknowledged no such obligation to any-

body—it was utterly and frankly selfish. While these changes were in progress, the Church still maintained its place of preëminence, and continued to absorb an undue share of the wealth produced by European society. The enormous value of the endowments of the parishes and monasteries, as well as their great landed estates, all exempted from the burdens of ordinary taxation and in large part withdrawn from productive enterprise, created a serious economic problem. The ethical teachings of the Church—its forbidding of interest, its criticism of the methods of business, its approval of the sumptuary laws that limited consumption, as well as of the legal wage, which forbade heartless exploitation of the laborer—the commercial class found "most tolerable and not to be endured." The Church continued this policy as long as was possible, long after it had ceased to be practicable. It regarded monopoly and extortion as little better than heresy. The principles of modern business were denounced by preachers and theologians[1] as unworthy of Christians, and so long as their influence was dominant business was left mainly to the Jews, who were hated in proportion as their shrewd practice of the rejected principles made them rich.

All this provoked the new capitalistic order to wage war on the Church, and the part of the cities in the struggle—which as we have seen was a decisive one—was mainly determined by the economic situation. Capitalism needed a free hand if it was to develop; the Church was a restraining hand; therefore down with the Church! And so it came about that Capitalism in the sixteenth century was a force on the side of freedom, a power for the promotion of civilization—not at all because it cared for freedom and civilization, but because it needed these as conditions of growth. Now it is an enemy of freedom and civilization, because, in its overgrown state, these are its chief enemies. Capitalism helped men break the old chains of feudalism. It destroyed the privilege of birth, if it did immediately substitute the privilege of wealth. It was not only an indispensable, but a beneficent stage in the world's progress toward liberty and equal rights.

It is easy to see why the cities, the strongholds of commerce and the trades, should heartily approve a Reformation programme that held as one of its chief items the confiscation of the Church's property to secular purposes, and the putting to productive uses and into active circulation a vast amount of wealth which had been locked away behind Church doors. This must have suggested itself to every reader as we have noted the bitterness of the Reformation warfare against monachism and monastic institutions. The religious motive is totally inadequate

[1] How far from understanding the economic questions of his time Luther was may be seen from a score of his sermons, and especially from his tract, *Von Kaufshandlung und Wucher*, 1524 LDS, 22: 199 *seq.*

to account for this bitterness. We must look for explanation to the economic facts: the monastic foundations of Germany had obtained control of a large part of the available capital, and so constituted a chief obstacle to the progress of commerce. The monasteries had to go, that business might come. Not only so, they had made themselves equally obnoxious to the guilds, in virtue of the fact that a monastery was an industrial plant; and the competition of these foundations with the guilds was resented by the latter, precisely as the competition of prison contract labor is resented by the trades unions of our day. And with good reason in either case, for the competition of free labor with the labor of prisons or monastic orders is essentially unfair and therefore intolerable. Economic hostility to monachism was more active than religious, therefore, and quite as justified by the facts. Not the corruption of the monasteries, not the essentially unchristian character of monachism, was the real cause of their suppression, but their antisocial effects. True, the religious motive was the one publicly alleged; but communities as well as individuals often have two reasons for their procedure: one the real reason, one the reason that they give. And it is always a relatively simple matter to find many excellent reasons to give, for doing whatever one ardently desires to do.

In these economic aspects, therefore, the Reformation must be looked upon as a triumph of the *bourgeoisie* or middle class. As we have seen, it was the support of the towns that turned the scale in at least two crises and saved Protestanism from utter suppression, and the towns did not fail to receive their reward. Next to the princes, if even second to them, they reaped most of the fruits of success. It would not be far from exact accuracy to say that if the princes snatched from the struggle the greater increase of political power, the towns on their part obtained the greater share of the wealth. Each got what it chiefly sought and prized most highly, and both were therefore reasonably content with the outcome. The knights and the peasants were the only classes that failed to profit in some way. The former were quite ruined, and the same might be said of the latter, if men who have nothing to begin with can be said to be ruined by their failure to gain something.

From some points of view the Reformation appears almost a failure. It proved to be a perversion rather than a development of the Renaissance. The revival of letters and art of the fifteenth century had as its main objective the deliverance of the human spirit from the despotism of the past; the religious revival of the sixteenth century did not dethrone despotism, it merely changed dynasties. It substituted for the universal Catholic Pope a group of new Protestant popelets: pope Martin in Germany, pope Henry in England, pope John at Geneva. Men soon

found that to exchange tyrants was to make no great progress in liberty. When for an infallible Church there was imposed on them an infallible Bible, the world found that it had not broken its chains but only changed the fashion of its fetters. As Lessing said, Luther had freed the world from the yoke of tradition, only to bind it with the yet more intolerable yoke of the letter. The Protestants would no longer admit the authority of the Fathers, but they followed Luther and Calvin with a slavishness that no Catholic has ever shown in following Augustine and Jerome.

Besides, Protestantism discredited itself with all thinking men by the freakish and inconsistent manner in which it enforced that which it avowed as its fundamental principle: the supremacy of Scripture. The principle was shown by the Protestant practice to be only a convenient war cry, not a thing sincerely believed and consistently followed. The Protestants objected to the Catholic practice of the invocation of saints as unscriptural, but themselves invoked the Holy Spirit, which is equally without Scriptural warrant. For, if the Protestant claim that his practice is a fair inference from what is taught in Scripture, the Catholic may make the same claim for his, and as matter of fact has made it. The Protestant vehemently rejects holy days, but insists on the observance of Sunday, for which there is no better warrant in the New Testament, and is in a fair way to establish a Christian Year of his own, differing from that of the Catholic Church only in that it lacks the latter's historic foundation and sacred associations. For while the Protestant will not have Lent or Holy Week, Easter or Whitsunday, he has established his Week of Prayer, his Thanksgiving Day, and is now adding his Children's Day, Mother's Day, and other such like, so that every month promises to have one or two memorial Sundays at least. If this differs from the Catholic Calendar, one might with much plausibility maintain that it differs for the worse. To argue that it is Scriptural would require an impudence to which as yet no Protestant has been equal.

The age of Luther was incapable of understanding that the revelation of God to man is a progressive revelation, not a thing once for all accomplished and written down in a book; and that man's search for truth is rewarded, not by full attainment, but by gradual approximation. Luther himself, though he professed to receive the Scriptures as final authority, never committed himself to any definite statement of what constitutes Scripture, or what is the content of the doctrine of inspiration. He had quarrel with the canon, both of Old and New Testaments, and did not hesitate to assert that certain books should be banished, as of no authority. He dealt with no little freedom with those that he accepted, and really respected none but those that contained what he regarded as cardinal

Christian doctrine. He made Paul his standard of orthodoxy, and whatever would not square with his interpretation of Paul must of necessity be wrong. But his followers rejected these vagaries, avowed acceptance of the whole canon, and elaborated a doctrine of inspiration of the most extreme and rigid type. The result was, in a single generation, to establish a system of Protestant scholasticism, as mechanical and destructive to religious freedom as the older Catholic scholasticism, and far less intellectually respectable. For much of this, they had the warrant of Luther himself. In beginning his revolt against Rome, he had appealed to reason, because that was a handy weapon to use against the Papacy. As the Reformation progressed, he repudiated reason with ever increasing violence, and his last sermon at Wittenberg, preached a few weeks before his death,[1] was an impassioned appeal to distrust reason as sure to mislead men into error and irreligion.

The Reformation accomplished little for religious liberty. With an inconsistency almost incredible and quite inexplicable, the reformers upheld the right of private judgment for themselves, when they differed from Rome, and then banished or burned those whose private judgment differed from their own. They were equally insistent in claiming liberty for themselves and in denying it to others. But they had taught the true doctrine, if they did not apprehend or practice it, and in process of time it made its way. Once taught it could not be untaught. By his inconsistency Luther has much dimmed his own glory, but he could retard only for a time the progress of the truth. His earlier service to the world as a teacher of religious liberty, grounding it in the true principles of Scripture and reason, must be held to outweigh his later treason to truth he had once seen so clearly and so loudly proclaimed. The world followed his teaching, not his example.

The Reformation was not a great immediate ethical force. Naturally, Roman Catholic writers have made much of this. Men had been demanding a Reformation for several centuries, but they meant by it an ethical change in the Church, an improvement in morals. For the most part they had no quarrel with the teachings or the ritual of the Church, but they revolted from its corruptions in head and members. Instead of this ethical renovation Luther offered novelties in doctrine, a theological reform, not an ethical. This was one reason why men like Erasmus, who in the beginning sympathized with Luther and wished him well, were constrained as his movement developed to sever all connection with it, and even to become its active opponents. The Reformers were themselves greatly disappointed with the ethical results of their work. Their later writings are filled with complaints of the horrible moral deteri-

[1] January 17, 1546. See Köstlin, 2: 616, and cf. LDS, 16: 264–275.

oration of the people.[1] Possibly the sharpness of their disappointment led to some exaggeration of statement, but that there was much foundation of truth underneath these complaints need not be doubted. The Reformation did not accomplish a moral renovation of Germany, account for the fact as we may.

Nor was so much accomplished as might have been hoped for the cause of enlightenment. Owing to its bibliolatry, the Reformation soon developed a Protestant obscurantism as fatal to human progress as the Catholic obscurantism had ever been. It was the continuance of the Renaissance in the *Aufklärung* of the eighteenth century that gave the world its next great impulse along the avenue of thought and discovery. It was not until the country of Luther broke away from all that was distinctive of Lutheranism that it acquired the leadership of the world in philosophy and science. So long as it was content to be the prisoner of Protestant scholasticism, Germany remained in the rear of the enlightened nations of Europe. But the *Aufklärung* left to orthodoxy thenceforth the task of contending, if it would, about the things concerning which none of us know much, and most of us know nothing, and none of us need to know anything, and turned the minds of adventurous and constructive thinkers to the conquest of nature and the solution of the problems of society.

These conclusions are so far from agreeing with the traditional Protestant views of the Reformation that some may be prompted to inquire, If then the immediate results of the movement are so disappointing, if it did almost nothing for social reorganization, for civil and religious liberty, for the enlightenment of the world and its advance in civilization, what is its significance? Must we be content, with the old man in Southey's poem on the battle of Blenheim, to the question, "But what good came of it at last," to answer,

> "Why that I cannot tell," said he;
> "But 'twas a famous victory."

Can we say no more of the Reformation than that it was a great movement, a historic struggle, a "famous victory"? Was Europe in reality only "marking time" in the sixteenth century, or was there a real advance? The world has always believed the latter to be true, and on grounds that still hold good. The Reformation is important to us to-day not so much for what it immediately accomplished, as for what it made

[1] See the truly remarkable collection of testimonies from Luther's writings made by Döllinger in *Die Reformation, ihre innere Entwicklung und ihre Wirkungen*, 3 vols., Regensburg, 1848, 1: 318–342. A similar collection of testimonies from Melanchthon is given in pp. 372–418. Cf. also the most important recent polemic work by a Roman Catholic author, Denifle, *Luther und Lutherthum*. Mainz, 1904, 1909, 2:16, 269 *seq.*, 358 *seq.*

possible. It shattered many idols and some ideals, but the new ideals that it offered in their stead have ever since ruled the world. It introduced into Europe a new spirit, and though its leaders became frightened and believed they had created a Frankenstein and did their best to undo their work, they did not succeed. Like Pandora, they had released something that could not again be confined. The new spirit survived their futile attempts to cripple and imprison it, and is the spirit of the modern world. That spirit is the conviction that nothing is to be accepted as truth merely because it is old, that nothing is to be accepted on authority, save the authority of the truth itself; that everything is subject to inquiry, and only that which bears every test of reason and experience can make good its claim to be truth.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIXES

I

DISPUTATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER CONCERNING PENITENCE AND INDULGENCES

In the desire and with the purpose of elucidating the truth, a disputation will be held on the subscribed propositions at Wittenberg, under the presidency of the reverend Father Martin Luther, monk of the Order of St. Augustine, Master of Arts and of Sacred Theology, and ordinary Reader of the same in that place. He therefore asks those who cannot be present and discuss the subject with us orally, to do so by letter in their absence. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

1. Our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, in saying, "Repent ye" etc. intended that the whole life of believers should be penitence.

2. This word cannot be understood of sacramental penance, that is, of the confession and satisfaction performed under the ministry of priests.

3. It does not, however, refer solely to inward penitence; nay, such inward penitence is naught, unless it outwardly produces various mortifications of the flesh.

4. The penalty thus continues as long as the hatred of self—that is, true inward penitence—continues; namely, until our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

5. The Pope has neither the will nor the power to remit any penalties, except those that he has imposed by his own authority, or by that of the canons.

6. The Pope has no power to remit any guilt, except by declaring and warranting it to have been remitted by God; or at most by remitting cases reserved for himself; in which cases, if his power were despised, guilt would certainly remain.

7. God never remits any man's guilt, without at the same time subjecting him, humbled in all things, to the authority of his representative, the priest.

8. The penitential canons are imposed only on the living, and no burden ought to be imposed on the dying, according to them.

9. Hence the Holy Spirit acting in the Pope does well for us, in that in his decrees, he always makes exception of the article of death and of necessity.

10. Those priests act wrongly and unlearnedly, who, in the case of the dying, reserve the canonical penances for purgatory.

11. Those tares about changing of the canonical penalty into the penalty of purgatory seem surely to have been sown while the bishops were asleep.

12. Formerly the canonical penalties were imposed not after, but before absolution, as tests of true contrition.

13. The dying pay all penalties by death, and are already dead to the canon laws, and are by right relieved from them.

14. The imperfect soundness or charity of a dying person necessarily brings with it great fear, and the less it is, the greater the fear it brings.

15. This fear and horror is sufficient by itself, to say nothing of other things, to constitute the pains of purgatory, since it is very near to the horror of despair.

16. Hell, purgatory and heaven appear to differ as despair, almost despair and peace of mind, differ.

17. With souls in purgatory it seems that it must needs be that, as horror diminishes, so charity increases.

18. Nor does it seem to be proved by any reasoning or any scriptures that they are outside of the state of merit or of the increase of charity.

19. Nor does this appear to be proved, that they are sure and confident of their own blessedness, at least all of them, though we may be very sure of it.

20. Therefore the Pope, when he speaks of the plenary remission of all penalties, does not mean simply of all, but only of those imposed by himself.

21. Thus those preachers of indulgences are in error who say that, by the indulgences of the Pope, a man is loosed and saved from all punishment.

22. For in fact he remits to souls in purgatory no penalty which they would have had to pay in this life according to the canons.

23. If any entire remission of all penalties can be granted to any, it is certain that it is granted to none but the most perfect, that is, to very few.

24. Hence the greater part of the people must needs be deceived by this indiscriminate and high-sounding promise of release from penalties.

25. Such power as the Pope has over purgatory in general, such has every bishop in his own diocese, and every curate in his own parish, in particular.

26. The Pope acts most rightly in granting remission to souls, not by the power of the keys (which is of no avail in this case) but by way of intercession.

27. They preach man, who say that the soul flies out of purgatory as soon as the money thrown into the chest rattles.

28. It is certain that, when the money rattles in the chest, avarice and gain may be increased, but the intercession of the Church depends on the will of God alone.

29. Who knows whether all the souls in purgatory desire to be redeemed from it, according to the story told of Saints Severinus and Paschal.

30. No man is sure of the reality of his own contrition, much less of the attainment of plenary remission.

31. Rare as is a true penitent, so rare is one who truly buys indulgences—that is to say, most rare.

32. Those who believe that, through letters of pardon, they are made sure of their own salvation, will be eternally damned along with their teachers.

33. We must especially beware of those who say that these pardons from the Pope are that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to God.

34. For the grace conveyed by these pardons has respect only to the penalties of sacramental satisfaction, which are of human appointment.

35. They preach no Christian doctrine, who teach that contrition is not necessary for those who buy souls out of purgatory or buy confessional licenses.

36. Every Christian who feels true compunction has of right plenary remission of pain and guilt, even without letters of pardon.

37. Every true Christian, whether living or dead, has a share in all the benefits of Christ and of the Church, given him by God, even without letters of pardon.

38. The remission, however, imparted by the Pope is by no means to be despised, since it is, as I have said, a declaration of the divine remission.

39. It is a most difficult thing, even for the most learned theologians, to exalt at the same time in the eyes of the people the ample effect of pardons and the necessity of true contrition.

40. True contrition seeks and loves punishment; while the ampleness of pardons relaxes it, and causes men to hate it, or at least gives occasion for them to do so.

41. Apostolical pardons ought to be proclaimed with caution, lest the people should falsely suppose that they are placed before other good works of charity.

42. Christians should be taught that it is not the mind of the Pope that the buying of pardons is to be in any way compared to works of mercy.

43. Christians should be taught that he who gives to a poor man, or lends to a needy man, does better than if he bought pardons.

44. Because, by a work of charity, charity increases, and the man becomes better; while, by means of pardons, he does not become better, but only freer from punishment.

45. Christians should be taught that he who sees anyone in need, and, passing him by, gives money for pardons, is not purchasing for himself the indulgences of the Pope, but the anger of God.

46. Christians should be taught that, unless they have superfluous wealth, they are bound to keep what is necessary for the use of their own households, and by no means to lavish it on pardons.

47. Christians should be taught that, while they are free to buy pardons, they are not commanded to do so.

48. Christians should be taught that the Pope, in granting pardons, has both more need and more desire that devout prayer should be made for him than that money should be readily paid.

49. Christians should be taught that the Pope's pardons are useful, if they do not put their trust in them, but most hurtful, if through them they lose the fear of God.

50. Christians should be taught that, if the Pope were acquainted with the exactions of the preachers of pardons, he would prefer that the Basilica of St. Peter should be burnt to ashes, than that it should be built up with the skin, flesh and bones of his sheep.

51. Christians should be taught that, as it would be the duty, so it would be the wish of the Pope, even to sell, if necessary, the Basilica

of St. Peter, and to give of his own money to very many of those from whom the preachers of pardons extract money.

52. Vain is the hope of salvation through letters of pardon, even if a commissary—nay, the Pope himself—were to pledge his own soul for them.

53. They are enemies of Christ and of the Pope, who, in order that pardons may be preached, condemn the word of God to utter silence in other churches.

54. Wrong is done to the word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or longer time is spent on pardons than on it.

55. The mind of the Pope necessarily is that, if pardons, which are a very small matter, are celebrated with single bells, single processions, and single ceremonies, the Gospel, which is a very great matter, should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions and a hundred ceremonies.

56. The treasures of the Church, whence the Pope grants indulgences, are neither sufficiently named nor known among the people of Christ.

57. It is clear that they are at least not temporal treasures, for these are not so readily lavished, but only accumulated, by many of the preachers.

58. Nor are they the merits of Christ and of the saints, for these, independently of the Pope, are always working grace to the inner man, and the cross, death and hell to the outer man.

59. St. Lawrence said that the treasures of the Church are the poor of the Church, but he spoke according to the use of the word in his time.

60. We are not speaking rashly when we say that the keys of the Church, bestowed through the merits of Christ, are that treasure.

61. For it is clear that the power of the Pope is alone sufficient for the remission of penalties and reserved cases.

62. The true treasure of the Church is the holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God.

63. This treasure, however, is deservedly most hateful, because it makes the first to be last.

64. While the treasure of indulgences is deservedly most acceptable, because it makes the last to be first.

65. Hence the treasures of the Gospel are nets, wherewith of old they fished for the men of riches.

66. The treasures of indulgences are nets, wherewith they now fish for the riches of men.

67. Those indulgences, which the preachers loudly proclaim to be the greatest graces, are seen to be truly such as regards the promotion of gain.

68. Yet they are in reality in no degree to be compared to the grace of God and the piety of the cross.

69. Bishops and curates are bound to receive the commissaries of apostolical pardons with all reverence.

70. But they are still more bound to see to it with all their eyes, and take heed with all their ears, that these men do not preach their own dreams in place of the Pope's commission.

71. He who speaks against the truth of apostolical pardons, let him be anathema and accursed.

72. But he, on the other hand, who exerts himself against the wantonness and license of speech of the preachers of pardons, let him be blessed.

73. As the Pope justly thunders against those who use any kind of contrivance to the injury of the traffic in pardons,

74. Much more is it his intention to thunder against those who, under the pretext of pardons, use contrivances to the injury of holy charity and of truth.

75. To think that papal pardons have such power that they could absolve a man even if—by an impossibility—he had violated the Mother of God, is madness.

76. We affirm on the contrary, that papal pardons cannot take away even the least of venial sins, as regards its guilt.

77. The saying that, even if St. Peter were now Pope, he could grant no greater graces, is blasphemy against St. Peter and the Pope.

78. We affirm on the contrary that both he and any other Pope has greater graces to grant, namely, the Gospel, powers, gifts of healing, etc. (1 Cor. xii. 9).

79. To say that the cross set up among the insignia of the papal arms is of equal power with the cross of Christ, is blasphemy.

80. Those bishops, curates and theologians who allow such discourses to have currency among the people, will have to render an account.

81. This license in the preaching of pardons makes it no easy thing, even for learned men, to protect the reverence due to the Pope against the calumnies, or, at all events, the keen questionings of the laity.

82. As for instance: Why does not the Pope empty purgatory for the sake of most holy charity and of the supreme necessity of souls—this being the most just of all reasons—if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of that most fatal thing, money, to be spent on building a basilica—this being a very slight reason?

83. Again: Why do funeral masses and anniversary masses for the deceased continue, and why does not the Pope return, or permit the withdrawal of the funds bequeathed for this purpose, since it is a wrong to pray for those already redeemed?

84. Again: What is this new kindness of God and the Pope, in that, for money's sake, they permit an impious man and an enemy of God to redeem a pious soul that loves God, and yet do not redeem that same pious and beloved soul, out of free charity, on account of its own need?

85. Again: Why is it that the penitential canons, long since abrogated and dead in themselves in very fact and not only by usage, are yet still redeemed with money, through the granting of indulgences, as if they were full of life.

86. Again: Why does not the Pope, whose riches are at this day more ample than those of the wealthiest of the wealthy, build the one basilica of St. Peter with his own money, rather than with that of poor believers?

87. Again: What does the Pope remit or impart to those who, through perfect contrition, have a right to plenary remission and participation?

88. Again: What greater good would the Church receive if the Pope, instead of once, as he does now, were to bestow these remissions and participations a hundred times a day on any one of the faithful?

89. Since it is the salvation of souls, rather than money, that the Pope seeks by his pardons, why does he suspend the letters and pardons granted long ago, since they are equally efficacious?

90. To repress these scruples and arguments of the laity by force alone, and not to solve them by giving reasons, is to expose the Church and the Pope to the ridicule of their enemies, and to make Christian men unhappy.

91. If then pardons were preached according to the spirit and mind of the Pope, all these questions would be resolved with ease; nay, would not exist.

92. Away then with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," and there is no peace.

93. Blessed be all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "The cross, the cross," and there is no cross.

94. Christians should be exhorted to strive to follow Christ their Head through pains, deaths and hells.

95. And thus trust to enter heaven through many tribulations, rather than in the security of peace.

PROTESTATION

I, Martin Luther, Doctor, of the order of Monks at Wittenberg, desire to testify publicly that certain propositions against pontifical indulgences, as they call them, have been put forth by me. Now, although, up to the present time, neither this most celebrated and renowned school of ours, nor any civil or ecclesiastical power has condemned me, yet there are, as I hear, some men of headlong and audacious spirit, who dare to pronounce me a heretic as though the matter had been thoroughly looked into and studied. But on my part, as I have often done before, so now, too, I implore all men, by the faith of Christ, either to point out to me a better way, if such a way has been divinely revealed to any, or at least to submit their opinion to the judgment of God and the Church. For I am neither so rash as to wish that my sole opinion should be preferred to that of all other men, nor so senseless as to be willing that the word of God should be made to give place to fables, devised by human reason.

II

TETZEL'S THESES ON INDULGENCES—FIRST SERIES[1]

In order that the truth may appear, and errors be suppressed, and, after due consideration, objections against Catholic truth be answered: brother John Tetzel, of the order of Preachers, Bachelor of Sacred Theology, and Inquisitor of heretical pravity, will sustain the subscribed propositions in the most distinguished university at Frankfort-on-Oder.

To the praise of God, for the defence of the Catholic faith, and for the honor of the Holy Apostolic See.

[1] For the Latin text of these theses, see Löscher, 1:504 *seq.*, and LOL, 27:294 *seq.* Tetzel was never believed to be the author of the theses published under his name, though the composition of the first series, at least, does not seem to be beyond his very ordinary capacity. Luther voiced the common rumor when he said, "Conrad Wimpina is claimed by all as the author of those theses, and I think it certain that he did so." Wimpina was professor in the university at Frankfort-on-Oder and a Catholic theologian of some note.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ [wished to teach all] the sacraments of the new law, by which he wished all to be bound, after his passion and ascension, (2) and he wished to teach all before his passion by his most suitable proclamation.

3. Therefore he errs, whoever says that Christ, when he proclaimed "Repent ye," wished inward repentance and outward mortification of the flesh in such wise, (4) that he could not also teach or at the same time understand the sacrament of penance and its parts—confession and satisfaction—as obligatory. Nay, verily, it avails nothing even if inward penance works outward mortification unless confession and satisfaction are accompanied by deed and prayer. (1, 2)[1]

5. This satisfaction (since God does not allow a transgression without a penalty) is made through penalty, or its equivalent in the divine acceptance.

6. What is imposed, either by the will of the priest or by canon, is sometimes enforced by divine justice here, or is remitted in purgatory. (4)

7. Just as no one is bound to repeat a confession, truly made, for the same offenses, save in few cases; (8) And however useful it might be, nevertheless neither priest nor Pope can demand that it be repeated, (9) So one absolved is not bound to repeat for the same sins the outward satisfying penance, when once rightly performed. To command the contrary is to err. (3, 4)

10. Notwithstanding, he is bound as long as he lives to grieve within, in conduct and disposition, and always to detest remitted sin, and not to live without fear concerning propitiation of sins.

11. This penalty, imposed on account of sins repented and confessed, the Pope can completely remit by means of indulgences; (12) Whether this has been imposed by him, or by the will of the priest, or by canon, or even is exacted by the divine justice; to deny this is to err. (5)

13. But, although through indulgences every penalty in matters determined is remitted which is due for sins, so that it is vindicative of them; (14) he errs, nevertheless, who thinks that because of this the penalty is removed that is healthful and preservative, since the Jubilee[2] is not ordained contrary to this.

15. However truly and entirely any one may receive remission through indulgences—he who denies that this can be done in matters determined errs; (16) Nevertheless no one ought to intermit works of satisfaction as long as he lives, since they are curative of sins remaining, preservative from future sins and meritorious.

17. Just as the Mosaic sacraments are barren elements, neither removing guilt nor justifying: (18) So the Jewish priests have neither keys nor office [*characterem*] whence they can remit guilt.

19. But the Christian sacraments produce the grace they signify, and hence also justify those who receive them.

[1] The numbers in parentheses at the end of this and other theses, indicate the numbers of Luther's theses intended to be controverted.

[2] The indulgence issued by Julius II, in 1506, for the new building of St. Peters (*Magnum Bullarium*, 5: 481 *seq.*), and renewed by Leo X, in 1515, for Germany, was *in forma Jubilaei:* by an ingenious fiction, Rome and its shrines were brought to those who were unable to make a pilgrimage thither.

20. And Christian priests have the true office and keys, by which they can remit even guilt: (21) not only by approving and declaring, as the priests of the old law of Aaron did with regard to leprosy, (22) but also ministerially and instrumentally, and by orderly performing the thing itself by means of the sacrament. (6)

23. Nay, just as God has keys of authority, Christ of excellence, so the Christian priest has ministerial keys.

24. Whoso says, therefore, that the Pope, or even the least priest, has no power over guilt save in approving or declaring, errs. (6)

25. Nay, he errs who does not believe that the least Christian priest has more power in regard to sin than the whole synagogue of the Jews formerly had.

26. Why does he not err then, who thinks that Christ, so far as he has not bound his power to the sacraments, (27) cannot remit sins by the excellence of his key, and save a man, apart from sacerdotal confession, approbation or declaration? (7)

28. Although contempt, true or inferred, has rejected the sacrament, which not seldom happens in late repentance, (29) neither unexpected death nor necessity exempts from the severest punishment that follows.

30. Nevertheless, we must not despair concerning these, since the least contrition that can take place at the end of life, (31) suffices for the remission of sins and the changing of the eternal penalty to a temporal.

32. But seeing that, on account of deficiency of time, the most cruel punishments not infrequently befall those who have died in such wise, (33) which are quickly remitted by plenary indulgences, such act foolishly as dissuade from buying confessional licenses.

34. Because of violence to a priest, penalties are imposed on the excommunicate, incendiaries, and incestuous, not alone after absolution, but sometimes after death; (35) on the one an oath not to repeat, on the other satisfaction—therefore he who denies that this can be done, errs. (10)

36. Not by sleeping bishops, but by chapters of the [canon] law, a priest is commanded to be discreet and pious, so that one confessed is sent to purgatory, (37) with the penalty of exile willingly received, rather than to hell as rejected. Who calls that "tares" therefore errs. (11)

38. Heretics, schismatics and traitors, are excommunicated after death, anathematized and exhumed. (39) Therefore, whoever says that those about to die pay all debts by death, and are not held by the canon law, errs. (13)

40. It is erroneous to say that souls about to be purified,[1] who depart in grace and charity—which separates between the sons of the kingdom and those of perdition, and far more of despair—(41) are near despair; but rather [one should say] they are in firm hope of obtaining happiness. (14, 15)

42. He errs who says that it is not proved either by reason or Scripture, that the purified[1] are beyond the state of merit. (18)

43. He errs who adds, that it is not proved how certain and secure they are of their happiness. Likewise he who says, (44) the souls about to be purified[1] cannot be more certain of their salvation than we, and that we are most certain. (19)

[1] Tetzel appears to use *animas purgandas* and *purgatos* as equivalent to Luther's phrase *animas in Purgatorio.*

45. He errs who says that the Pope does not mean by plenary remission the remission of all penalties, but only those imposed by himself. (20)

46. To say that the preachers of indulgences err when they declare that a man may be relieved of all penalty by the indulgence of the Pope and be saved, is an error. (21)

47. To say that the Pope can remit no penalty to souls in Purgatory which they ought to remove in this life according to the canons, is an error. (22)

48. He errs who says that only the most perfect can obtain pardons, and not also the perfect, the still more perfect, beginners and progressive. (49) Likewise also [whoever says that] not only the fully contrite but the impenitent [*attritos*, imperfectly penitent] and the contrite through confession [can obtain pardons]. (23)

50. He errs whoever says this can happen to very few, and not to most who do what the Jubilee requires. (24)

51. It is an error to assert that the Pope has no greater or more efficacious power over Purgatory, by imparting generally the Jubilee [i.e. its benefits] in form of intercession (52) than such or as great as any bishop or priest [*plebanus*, lit. country priest] has especially in his own diocese and parish. (25)

53. Even if the Pope have no power of the keys over Purgatory, he nevertheless has the authority to apply the Jubilee to them by way of intercession. (26)

54. To deny this power over Purgatory in the Pope, under the form of the key, is to contradict the truth and to err. (26)

55. For a soul to fly out, is for it to obtain the vision of God, which can be hindered by no interruption, (56) therefore he errs who says that the soul cannot fly out before the coin can jingle in the bottom of the chest. (27)

57. It is an error to find gain and avarice in public intercession, and not to seek the effect of purgation. (28)

58. It is a manifest error to doubt if all souls wish to be redeemed, or being redeemed to escape Purgatory. (29)

59. With regard to conjectural security, as far as human weakness attains, it is an error [to hold] that no one is certain of obtaining pardon,[1] even those who have done what the Jubilee requires. (30)

60. It is an error [to say] that only a few, and not most of those who fulfil the Jubilee requirements, obtain pardons. (31)

61. It is an error [to say] that one released through plenary pardon, according to the form of the decretal [*rescripti*], is not certain of his salvation just as if truly confessed and penitent. (32)

62. It is an error [to hold] that a man is not reconciled to God by Papal indulgences duly acquired by every form, just as if truly penitent and confessed. (33)

63. It is an error [to teach men] not to look for pardoning grace, except for penalties of satisfaction imposed by man, and not also those imposed by the canon or divine justice. (34)

64. It is an error [to say] that it is not a Christian doctrine, that those

[1] Or, certain about the effect of pardons (*de veniarum consecutione*), but the use of *consequar* and its cognate forms in the other theses points to the rendering adopted above.

who are about to buy confessional licenses or the Jubilee indulgence for their friends in Purgatory can do these things without repentance. (35)

65. It is an error [to hold] that any Christian whatever, truly penitent, has quickly and completely plenary remission of penalty and guilt without indulgences. (36)

66. It is an error [to say] that any Christian whatever, whether living or dead, has a share in all benefits, and to the extent of an authoritative remission of sins. (37)

67. It is an error [to hold] that there is the same share in all benefits through charity as through the power of having mediation.[1] (37)

68. Again, it is an error [to say] that there is the same share in all benefits for acquiring and increasing merits, as for giving satisfaction.

69. It is an error to say that the remission of the Pope and the share [in all benefits] are not to be despised only because declaration is made of the divine remission.

70. It is an error [to say] that it is very easy, only for the most learned theologians, and not also for those moderately versed, at once to exalt the ample effect of pardons and the necessity of true contrition. (39)

71. He errs who does not know that, instead of those satisfying penalties that contrition seeks, Christ's pardons impose compensatory penalties, but because they do not remit those that are medicative, contrition has the penalties that it loves continuing through the whole life. (40)

72. Works of charity avail more in obtaining merit, but plenary pardons more in quickly making satisfaction and obtaining total remission. He errs who does not know this, or does not believe it, and who teaches the people one and is silent about the other. (41)

73. Plenary indulgences avail more in making satisfaction and obtaining remission completely, quickly and remarkably, but works of charity avail more in obtaining merit, grace, and chiefly in increasing glory. He errs who does not think the Pope wishes the people to be so taught. (41)

74. But since plenary indulgence differs exceedingly [*secundum excedentia et excessa*] from particular works of mercy (as they are commonly called); he is guilty of signal presumption and error who teaches the people that the Pope wishes the purchase of pardons to be in no way compared with so-called works of mercy. (42)

75. Giving to the poor and lending to the needy is doing better as to the increase of merit; but buying pardons is better as to more speedy making satisfaction. He errs who teaches the people otherwise and leads them astray; likewise he who thinks that to buy pardons is not also a work of mercy. (43)

76. Although by pardons a man may first become freer from punishment, nevertheless, since the work by which they are bought becomes one of charity, he who buys becomes better in consequence of his internal devotion. He doubly errs who teaches the people otherwise. (44)

77. Spiritual alms are preferable to corporal and are more commonly given. Whence if one needs pardon, and cannot aid the poor without

[1] *Applicationem* (lit. clientship). The *ius applicationis* was the right of a client to the protection of his patron. The transference of this idea to the doctrine of indulgences is obvious. Elsewhere in the theses the word is rendered "intervention" or "mediation."

danger of want, he does far better by buying than by helping the poor, as said before. He who teaches the contrary, errs. (44)

78. Merit and extent of merits are generally approved according to the importance of works and the purpose of charity; therefore he deserves pardons more who obtains them from necessaries than [he who obtains them] from superfluities. Whence he doubly errs who teaches that any one sins in acquiring merit in this way. (46)

79. Although the buying of pardons has not been commanded, it is nevertheless the wisest course for those who need them. Whoever says the former and is silent about the latter, leads the people astray and errs. (47)

80. What need Leo more than others has of prayers for himself can only be conjectured [*est divinare*]. But we are bound to pray for Pope Leo by the obligation of both human and divine law. (81) And since that is done as a matter of necessity, he errs who says that on account of it the Pope ought to grant indulgences. (48)

82. Unless faith, devotion, nay confidence, are cherished with regard to pardons, indulgences amount to nothing and are useless. Whoever says the contrary errs most seriously. (49)

83. Since the sums exacted for pardons under Leo are very small as compared with his predecessors, therefore he errs impiously who says that he is planning to build the church of St. Peter's with the flesh, skin and bones of his own sheep. (50)

84. Indulgences are useful to him who does what lies in him, and according to the tenor of the bulls, however it may happen that railers [*oblatrantes*, lit. barkers] err. (85). Therefore it is a most abominable error to say that confidence in salvation through letters of pardon is vain, even if the Pope were to put his own soul in pawn for them. (52)

86. If the least bishop can impose silence on others, either while he himself wishes to preach, or to have some one preach before him; (87) it is a very grave error to say that the Pope is the enemy of the cross if he wishes to publish the Jubilee in a like manner. (53)

88. If the legends of the saints may without harm be read on their feast days at greater length than the Gospel, one can continue to publish pardons an equal or longer time than the reading of the Gospel. To say the contrary is to err doubly. (54)

89. It is an error [to say] the mind of the Pope is, that pardons should be celebrated with single bells, processions and ceremonies, the Gospel with a hundred bells, processions and ceremonies. (55)

90. It is an error [to say] that the treasury of the Church, whence the Pope grants indulgences, is not sufficiently named or known. (56)

91. It is an error [to say] that the treasury of Christ is not the merits of Christ and the saints. (58)

92. It is an error [to say] that these work pardoning (that is, sufficient on the side of God), quick, and complete satisfaction, without the mediation of the Pope. (58)

93. [To say] that the treasure of the Church was the poor, in the time of St. Lawrence is an error. (59)

94. [To say] that the treasure of the Church is only the keys of the Church given by the merit of Christ, is an error. (60)

95. It is an error [to say] that the power of the Pope alone suffices for the remission of penalties, without intervention of the treasury of the Church, that is, of the merits of Christ. (61)

96. The Gospel, the gift of healing, [and] the sacraments of pardon are alike called by the name of grace; to proclaim the one and neglect the other is to err. (62)

97. It is an error [to say] that the indulgences that preachers proclaim to be the greatest graces, are truly such as to promoting gain. (67)

98. Yea, [to teach] that the treasuries of indulgences are nets with which they fish for the riches of men, is a most impious error. (66)

99. And since a sin committed against the Mother of Christ, however enormous, is less than if the same were committed against the Son, which is remissible by the express testimony of Christ (100) therefore, whoever says that such a sin cannot be remitted in the truly contrite by indulgences, is mad, raves and errs, against the text of the Gospel and Christ himself. (75)

101. Moreover, to propose to the subcommissaries and preachers of pardons that if, by an impossibility, anyone should violate the ever Virgin Mother of God, they could absolve the same by the power of indulgences—it is clearer than light that the one so proposing against the evident truth, is moved by hatred and thirsts for the blood of his brethren. (75)

102. To lay down also in public propositions, that preachers of pardons (although never heard) overflow before the people with excess of words and consume [*proterrere*, lit. frighten away] more time in explaining pardons than in preaching the Gospel, is to sow falsehoods heard from others and invented for truth, and he who quickly believes shows himself thereby to be fickle and errs grievously. (72, 54)

103. In fine, to lay down in public propositions, that preachers of pardons are so far wanting through their licentious preaching as to make it no easy task even for learned men to secure respect for the Pope from the questions of acute laymen, is, after first bringing contumely upon the Pope, to flatter him and openly insinuate that all the rest have obtained safely [*portum possidisse*], and that he alone makes trouble, and in this to err exceedingly. (81)

104. It belongs to grace formally to remit, effectively and chiefly by God, regularly (though insufficiently) by a pure man,[1] satisfactorily by Christ, instrumentally by the sacraments. Whoever therefore says the Pope cannot remit the least venial [sin] as to guilt, errs. (76)

105. He who denies that the same power belongs to Peter and all his Vicars, errs. Whoever thinks Peter has more power over pardons than Leo errs greatly, yea, blasphemes. (77)

106. He errs who says just as he who adores the cross of Christ or any image whatsoever, as a thing and not as a sign, offers divine worship [*latria adorat*], likewise that the cross of Christ excels among however many others, as objects of adoration, and ought to be venerated more; nevertheless, he who offers divine worship to other things, and does not equally adore that [cross] represented also in the Papal arms, is guilty of idolatry and error. (69)

[1] *Homini puro;* or, this may mean, by a mere man, by man alone.

SECOND DISPUTATION OF JOHN TETZEL

BROTHER John Tetzel, of the order of Preachers, Bachelor of Sacred Theology, and inquisitor of heretical pravity, will publicly and briefly defend and dispute the subscribed propositions, at the university of Frankfort-on-Oder, on a certain day that will be named at the earliest possible time: whoever ought to be censured as heretic, schismatic, obstinate, contumacious, erroneous, seditious, ill-expressing, rash and injurious, at the first look will be clearly seen in them.

To the praise of God and the honor of the Holy Apostolic See, in the year of our salvation, 1517.

1. Christians should be taught that, since the power of the Pope is supreme in the Church and was instituted by God alone, it can be restrained or increased by no mere man, nor by the whole world together, but by God only.

2. Christians should be taught that they are bound to render simple obedience to the Pope, who holds them all in his immediate jurisdiction, in respect to those things that pertain to the Christian religion and to his chair, if they are consonant with divine and natural law.

3. Christians should be taught that the Pope, by authority of his jurisdiction, is superior to the entire Catholic Church and its councils, and that they should humbly obey his statutes.

4. Christians should be taught that the Pope has the sole [power] of deciding those things that are of faith, and that he and no other may interpret the sense of Holy Scripture as to its meaning, and that he has [the power] to approve or disapprove all the words or works of others.

5. Christians should be taught that the judgment of the Pope, in those matters that are of faith and necessary to man's salvation, cannot err in the least.

6. Christians should be taught that even if the Pope should err in faith, concerning the things that are of faith, by holding a bad opinion, he will not err concerning those things that are of faith when he pronounces judgment upon them.[1]

7. Christians should be taught that the decisions of the Pope, which he publishes as to matters that are of faith, ought to have more weight in a cause than the decisions of any number of wise men regarding the doctrines [*opinionibus*] of the Scriptures.

8. Christians should be taught that the Pope deserves always and humbly to be honored by them, and not to be injured.

9. Christians should be taught that those who derogate from the honor and authority of the Pope, incur the penalty of the curse and the crime of treason [*laesae majestatis*].

[1] That is, the Pope may be a heretic privately, and as to his personal beliefs, yet in his official action as head of the Church he will be preserved by the Holy Spirit from error. This thesis anticipates with remarkable accuracy the treatment by modern theologians, as Hefele, of the case of Pope Honorius, who in 680 was anathematized by the Sixth Ecumenical Council for heretical views expressed in a letter to Sergius, Patriarch of Constantinople (Mansi, 11: 631; Hefele, *History of Councils*, Eng. tr., 5: 167). These views, not being spoken *ex cathedra*, as pastor and teacher of all Christians, are not regarded by Roman theologians as coming within the scope of the Vatican definition of infallibility (Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, 2: 270).

10. Christians should be taught that those who expose the Pope to jeers and slanders, are marked with the stain of heresy and shut out from hope of the kingdom of heaven.

11. Christians should be taught that those who dishonor the Pope are punished with temporal disgrace, and also with the worst death and scandalous disorder.

12. Christians should be taught that the keys of the Church do not belong to the universal church, as the assembly of all believers is called, but to Peter and the Pope, and have been bestowed on all their successors and on all prelates to come, through derivation from them.

13. Christians should be taught that a general council cannot give plenary indulgence, nor other prelates of the Church, together or singly, but the Pope alone, who is the bridegroom of the Church universal.

14. Christians should be taught that no mortals can determine the truth and faith concerning the obtaining of indulgences—no, not even a general council, but the Pope alone, who has [the power] to render final judgment concerning catholic truth.

15. Christians should be taught that catholic truth is called universal truth, and that it ought to be believed by Christ's faithful ones, and that it contains nothing either of falsehood or of iniquity.

16. Christians should be taught that the Church holds many things as catholic truths, which are by no means contained in the same form of words in the canon of Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments.

17. Christians should be taught that the Church holds many things as catholic truths, which nevertheless are not laid down as such either in the biblical canon or by earlier teachers.

18. Christians should be taught that all observances regarding matters of faith, defined by the decision of the Apostolic See, are to be reckoned among catholic truths, although not found to be contained in the canon of Holy Scripture.

19. Christians should be taught that those things that teachers approved by the Church have positively handed down concerning the holding of the faith and the confuting of heretics, although they are not expressly contained in the canon of Holy Scripture—their writings of this character are nevertheless to be reckoned among catholic truths.

20. Christians should be taught that although certain truths may not be absolutely catholic, they none the less smack of catholic truth.[1]

21. Christians should be taught that all those smack of heresy, who say that no use of the cross of Christ should be made in the churches.

22. Christians should be taught that those who cherish deliberate doubts concerning the faith should be most clearly condemned as heretics.

23. Christians should be taught that those who are ordained to holy orders for money may most clearly be called heretics.

24. Christians should be taught that all who interpret the Holy Scripture badly, and not as the sense of the Holy Spirit demands, by whom it has been written, may most justly be called heretics.

25. Christians should be taught that he must properly be called a

[1] The Roman Church still maintains this distinction between dogma, a doctrine that is of faith and must therefore be believed by all, and a pious opinion that may be believed by any and should be treated with respect by all.

heretic, who for the sake of temporal glory either originates or follows false and new doctrines.

26. Christians should be taught that all those are most justly called heretics who attempt to take away the privilege of the Roman Church, delivered by the highest head of all Churches.

27. Christians should be taught that, after the example of the blessed Ambrose, they ought to follow in all things as their master the Holy Roman Church, and not their own imaginings.

28. Christians should be taught that whosoever persistently defends his own perverse and depraved doctrine, against the rule of catholic truth, should be condemned as a heretic and be proclaimed such by all.

29. Christians should be taught that those who teach anything as certain, which cannot be validly proved either by reason or by authority, must be condemned as rash.

30. Christians should be taught that those who assert at any time what things are false, are to be held as in error.[1]

31. Christians should be taught that those who draw away any one of the faithful, or some notable person, should be condemned as injurious.

32. Christians should be taught that those who write propositions that furnish occasion of disaster to those who hear, whatever qualification may be added, are truly to be held, as if they published them absolutely and without qualification, to be causes of offence, sayers of evil, and offenders of pious ears, in-so-far as they seem to urge heretical propositions.

33. Christians should be taught that assertions of teachers that bring in schism among the people—as is that proposition: One should not obey a bad prelate or prince, or, One should not believe the Pope and his bulls—are by all means seditious.

34. Christians should be taught that all who originate false doctrines, and defend them persistently, should properly be condemned as heretics.

35. Christians should be taught that all who, in contempt of the divine law, are either inventors of persistent error or followers of another, who would rather be opponents of catholic truth than its subjects, should certainly be condemned as heretics.

36. Christians should be taught that all defenders of others' errors, err not alone as to that, but also make ready for others' stumbling-blocks of error, and show that they should not only be held to be heretics but even arch-heretics.

37. Christians should be taught that those who originate new doctrines contrary to catholic truth, which they may be pertinacious to hold, and because of them depart from the common life, from either fickleness or perversity, because this proceeds from pride, which properly is the love of superiority,—even if they are not influenced by any desire of temporal advantage, they are nevertheless without doubt to be held as heretics.

38. Christians should be taught that those who adhere to the doctrines of scholars [*Magistrorum*], contrary to catholic truth, err obstinately, and sin in erring, and thereby come to be condemned as heretics.

39. Christians should be taught that those who deny any catholic truth whatsoever, which is published as catholic among all the faithful

[1] Because only the Pope had the right (according to Tetzel) to do this.

with whom they associate, and is publicly proclaimed by preachers of the word of God, are said to be obstinate in their error.

40. Christians should be taught that those who deny the assertions which they know to be contained in Holy Scripture or in the decision of the Church, must be condemned as obstinate in their heresy.

41. Christians should be taught that those who do not correct or amend their error, whenever it has been shown them in a lawful manner that their error opposes catholic truth, must be condemned as contumacious in their heresy.

42. Christians should be taught that they must be condemned as obstinate in their error, who, erring against the catholic faith and the decision of the Church, proudly refuse to submit themselves to the correction and amendment of him to whom the duty belongs.

43. Christians should be taught that those who have been reproved for some plain error against the faith, and refuse to be informed concerning the truth, are in error and should be proclaimed as obstinate in this sort of heresy.

44. Christians should be taught that those who protest in words, deeds or writings that they are not at all willing to revoke their heretical assertions, even if those whose duty it is should rain or hail excommunications against such opinions, are to be held as obstinate heretics, and are to be shunned by all.

45. Christians should be taught that those who invent and defend new errors in defence of heretical pravity, in as far as they are not ready to be corrected and to seek truth with careful solicitude, are certainly to be held as obstinate in their heresies.

46. Christians should be taught that those beneath the chief Pontiff, if they formally define a certain assertion as heretical or decide that it must be held, and impose it upon others because they deem it to be catholic,—are to be held and proclaimed as obstinate heretics, one and all who agree with such decisions of theirs.

47. Christians should be taught that they obstinately err, who have the power to resist heretical pravity, and yet do not resist it, and that by this course they themselves befriend the errors of heresy.[1]

48. Christians should be taught that those who defend the error of heretics and effect this by their own power, [should beware] lest they come into the hands of the judge to be tried, as excommunicates, and if they do not make satisfaction within a year, be held by their own law as infamous, who are also, according to the chapters of the law, terribly punished with many penalties, to the terror of all men.

49. Christians should be taught not to be influenced, in their faith about the authority of the Pope and his indulgences, by the boldness of obstinate heretics, for our pious Lord and God would not have permitted heretics to arise, except that Truth might appear more clear to faith by their arising, and we might by this means escape from irrational infancy; but they should rather continue credulous regarding the truth preached concerning the parts of penance and indulgences; through which constancy on their part in the aforesaid faith, the approbation of them by God may be made clear and evident to the whole world.

[1] This thesis and the one following are evidently aimed at the Elector Frederick, of Saxony.

50. And so those who wish as much as they can to fill letters and books concerning the parts of penance (confession of the mouth and satisfaction by works, brought in and instituted by God and the Gospel, and promulgated by Apostles, and approved and followed by the whole Church, and yet impugned by [my][1] adversary unrighteously and irreligiously in his common speech, in so many articles), and concerning plenary indulgence and the power of the chief Roman Pontiff with regard to the same, and [wish] with a certain unrestrainable cheek [*fronte*] to preach publicly or dispute concerning them, to win favor for their writings, scatter them among the people and make them common throughout the world, or to speak impudently and by way of contempt concerning these very things, in corners or in part before men,—let them fear for themselves lest they fall upon the foregoing propositions, and through this expose themselves and others to the peril of damnation and of severe temporal disorder. For a beast that has touched the mountain shall be stoned.

III

APPEAL OF BROTHER MARTIN LUTHER TO A COUNCIL[2]

In the name of the Lord, Amen. In the 1518th year from the birth of the same [Lord], in the sixth indiction,[3] on Sunday, November 28th, in the sixth year of the pontificate of our most holy father and lord in Christ, Leo X., by divine providence Pope; in the presence of the public notary and the subscribed witnesses, summoned and called for this special purpose, master [dominus] Martin Luther, ordained reverend Father, an Augustinian of Wittenberg, Doctor[4] of sacred theology, and there ordinary lecturer on theology, first and chiefly for himself, but also beyond revocation by any of his deputies hereafter appointed by him, having and holding in his hands a certain schedule of citation and appeal, with the design and purpose of addressing, calling and entreating an appeal[5] (saying, narrating, entreating and appealing in regard to certain legal cases in the same schedule contained and embodied) to a council, the next and immediately to be [held], assembled legally and in the Holy Spirit, to the entire exclusion indeed of other assemblies, factions and private synods; affirming and setting forth other facts, such as are more fully contained, included and described in the aforesaid schedule of appeal, whose contents are appended and are as follows:

[1] The pronoun is evidently required, for the reference can be to nobody but Luther.

[2] The original Latin text is in Löscher, 2: 505 *seq.* and LOL, 28: 435 *seq.* A German version is given in Walch, 15: 656 *seq.* The differences of text are trifling.

[3] An indiction is a period of fifteen years, a method of reckoning supposed to have been instituted for fiscal purposes by Constantine, in the year 313. Indictions carried back will be found to vary three years from the Christian era, hence the rule: add three to the calendar year, divide by fifteen, and the remainder is the year of the indiction. If there is no remainder, it is the fifteenth year. "Sixth indiction" above is an abbreviated phrase for "sixth year of the indiction."

[4] *Magister* in the Latin, which was the equivalent of the Doctor's degree now, and both are equivalent to the "Professor" of the first appeal.

[5] *Apostolus.* In Roman law an *apostolus* is a notice sent to a higher tribunal, and its sense in the canon law appears to be the same. The German has here *deswegen Verweinungsbriefe*, "for the sake of a certificate of appeal."

Since the remedy of appeal was devised by legislators for the assistance and relief of the oppressed, and not only from things inflicted but also from those to be inflicted, the law allows those menaced with wrongs and injuries to appeal, to the end that the inferior cannot decide concerning the right of appeal to the superior.[1] But since it is a sufficiently acknowledged fact that a most holy council, legally assembled in the Holy Spirit, representing the Holy Catholic Church, in cases concerning the faith is above the Pope, it follows that the Pope cannot in such cases decide that there shall be no appeal from him to a council. So if he does that which in no way pertains to his functions, the appeal itself is a sort of legal defense that is in accordance with divine, natural and every human law, and cannot be withdrawn by a ruler.

Therefore I, brother Martin Luther, of the order of friars of St. Augustine, of Wittenberg, also ordinary lecturer there on the same subject, first and chiefly for myself, come before you, the public notary, as a man of known and legal standing, and the witnesses here present, with the motive and intention of petitioning, appealing, and seeking and receiving a notice of appeal [*apostolus*]; nevertheless, stating in advance with solemn protest that I purpose to say nothing against the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which I have no doubt is mistress of the whole world and holds the pre-eminence; nor against the authority of the holy Apostolic See, and the power of our most venerable and wise Lord, the Pope. Nevertheless, if anything shall be said less correctly and without becoming reverence—perchance on account of the uncertainty [*lubrico*, lit. "slipperiness"] of the tongue, but more likely by reason of irritation of enemies—I am very ready to correct that.

He who acts as God's vicar on earth and whom we call Pope, since he is a man like us, chosen from among men, and is himself (as the Apostle says) "compassed with infirmity" [Heb. 5 : 2], he may err, sin, lie, become empty. And he is not free from that general word of prophecy: "Every man is a liar."[2] Nor indeed was St. Peter, the first and most holy of all the pontiffs, exempt from this infirmity, but rather with blameworthy dissimulation he opposed the truth of the Gospel; so that with a stern but most holy rebuke from the apostle Paul his work had to be corrected, as is written in Galatians ii. And with this most noble example shown to the Church by the Holy Spirit, and left in the most sacred Scriptures, we who believe in Christ are taught and established. If any supreme pontiff falls on account of infirmity, the same as or like Peter's, and teaches or decrees anything that may oppose divine commands, not only should he not be obeyed, but also with the apostle Paul one can, nay should, resist him to his face; just as the infirmity of the head is relieved by the lower members, with the loyal care of the whole body. In the present and perpetual memory of this example it has happened—not without the special purpose of God, as may plainly be perceived—that not only St. Peter, but also his salutary censurer Paul, equally and in like manner were patrons and rulers of the Holy Roman Church. So that indeed we are continually instructed, not only by their letters, but also by the

[1] This is a somewhat free rendering of *adeo quod inferior de non appellando ad superiorem statuere non possit, et manus superiorem claudere*, but the following sentence shows that this is the sense intended.

[2] The reference can only be to Ps. 116: 11, "I said in my haste, All men are liars"—or, "all men are a lie," as the Revised Version has it.

substantial memorial of this very necessary and most wholesome example, as well the heads themselves as we, the members. But, if furnished with any power of the mighty, the Pope shall prevail to so great an extent that one cannot resist him, one means certainly remains, namely, that aforesaid remedy of appeal, by which the oppressed are relieved.

Therefore I also, brother Martin Luther aforesaid, having recourse to the manner and intention already mentioned, affirm and declare that in our land of Saxony in former days, indulgences were proclaimed most indiscreetly by certain apostolic commissioners (as they claimed). So that, in order to suck up the money of the people, they began to preach certain absurd, heretical and blasphemous things, resulting in misleading the souls of believers and in supreme mockery of the power of the Church, especially with regard to the power of the Pope over Purgatory (as contained in their little book called "A brief appointment").[1] Now it is certain from the Canon *Abusionibus* that the Pope does not have any power at all over Purgatory. Again, by the universal opinion of the whole Church, and the general consent of all learned men, indulgences are nothing but remissions of a penance [*satisfactionis poenitentialis*] imposed by one's [ecclesiastical] judge. As is clear from the text of the Canon *Quod autem*, the penance imposed by an ecclesiastical judge may not be anything other than works of fasting, prayer, alms, etc., and so it cannot be remitted by the keys of the Church, because it was not imposed by them. Further, it is certain from paragraph XXXV, of Canon *Qualis*, that in Purgatory not only punishment but also guilt is remitted.[2] But the Church cannot remit guilt, just as also it cannot bestow grace.

When I relied on these authorities, because I was about to oppose their vile and absurd doctrines after the manner of a disputation, mad with the love of gain they first began in public address to the people to declare with most shameless boldness that I was a heretic; then, through a certain master Marius of Perusium, fiscal procurator, to accuse me to our most venerable lord, Leo X, as suspected of heresy. At length procuring through the influence of the same man a commission for citing me to the presence of the most reverend lords and fathers, Jerome of Genutium, Bishop of Asculani, hearer of causes in camera, and Sylvester Prierias, master of the palace, they brought it to pass that I was cited to the City [of Rome] to be examined in person.

I could not accomplish so long a journey from Wittenberg, free from plots, nor could I remain at Rome safely, and I was weak and frail in body. Also the aforesaid judges were suspected by me for many reasons; especially because the reverend father Sylvester has been my opponent, and had already published a treatise against me, and he was also less learned in sacred letters than that case demanded. Master Jerome, moreover, was more learned in the law than in theology, and it was justly feared that he was about to assent to the Sylvestrine theology, and to treat this case beyond the manner of his profession. Therefore I urged, through the most illustrious prince, Lord Frederick, Duke of Saxony,

[1] The text reads *summaria institutio*, but it evidently should be *instructio*, and the German has, correctly, *summarische Instruction*. The document in question is given in German by Walch, 15: 302 *seq*. The Latin original is given in Gerdsii, *Historia Reformationis*, I, ap. 83.

[2] In the first appeal the doctrine of indulgences is discussed more fully, and in a tone of greater boldness.

High Marshal of the Holy Roman Empire, Landgrave of Thuringia, Marquis of Misnia, that the case be committed to persons who are not suspected, but are honorable and good men.

Then they, practised in a certain gross and silly cunning, influenced the most holy Lord Leo, so that the case was transferred to themselves, that is, to the person of the most reverend master Thomas, Cardinal of St. Sixtus, then in Germany as the legate of the Apostolic See. He was of the order of preachers [Dominicans], and of the Thomist faction, hence a chief opponent, and would be expected easily to proclaim himself against me and for them. Or, what amounts to the same thing, I would surely be alarmed at the sight of this judge and refuse to appear, thereby being guilty of contumacy. Nevertheless, relying on God's truth, I came to Augsburg with much labor and amid many perils, and was indeed kindly received by the aforesaid most reverend. Here my protest and pledge were neglected, in which I had offered to answer either in public or in private, before a notary and witnesses,[1] and finally before four distinguished men present, of the rank of imperial councillors. Likewise I submitted myself and my words to the Holy Apostolic See, and to the judgment of four noted universities: Basel, Freiburg, Louvain, lastly also to that most noble parent of studies, [or universities, *studiorum*] Paris. [After all this] he simply urged me to retract, nor was he willing to show me my errors, nor by what reasons or authorities the error could be recognized by me. Naturally too much influenced by the brothers of his party, and assuming an aspect of harshness, in fearful and very cruel threats he menaced me with the power of a certain Apostolic Brief, unless I should retract with abject entreaties, and with promises to be taught, and with requests for information. Then he commanded that I should not return before his face.[2]

Vexed with these troubles, I then appealed from his unjust and violent audacity and pretended commission, to our most holy lord, Leo X, better informed, as is more fully contained in the schedule of that appeal.[3] Now although that appeal (as I have said) has been lightly esteemed, I yet desire up to this day nothing except that my error be shown me; whoever can establish it. In regard to this I duly affirm a second time that I am quite ready to retract if I shall be shown that I have said anything wrong. Finally, I submitted my whole contention to the supreme pontiff, so that I have nothing further to do in these things than to await judgment, and this I am awating until now.

Nevertheless, as I hear, the same most reverend master Thomas, Cardinal of St. Sixtus, writes to the most illustrious prince, Lord Frederick,[4] that proceedings are taken against me in the Roman Curia, and that by the authority of our same most holy lord [the Pope], the pre-

[1] This protest is document 200 in the Walch collection (15: 568 *seq.*), and may be found in Latin in LOL, 28: 371 *seq.*

[2] The *Acta Augustana*, giving a full account of the three hearings before Cajetan, from Luther's point of view, are documents 224–227 of the Walch collection (15: 612 *seq.*). The originals may be found in Löscher 11: 544 *seq.*, and LOL, 28: 349 *seq.*

[3] This appeal from Cajetan to the Pope, dated October 16, is given in the original form by Löscher, 11: 484 *seq.*, and LOL, 28: 397 *seq.* A German version is in the Walch collection, doc. 212, 15: 594 *seq.*

[4] This letter is document 237 in the Walch collection (15: 634 *seq.*), and may be found in the Latin original in Löscher, 11: 527, and LOL, 28: 405 *seq.*

tended judges carry out the case to my condemnation, paying no attention to my faithful and superabounding obedience, with how great difficulty I appeared at Augsburg; nor caring for my most honest offer, in which I presented myself for a public or private reply; finally despising one of Christ's sheep, who humbly asked to be taught the truth and led back from error. Indeed, without a hearing or a reason given, with pure tyranny and plenitude of power, they simply urged me to recall the opinion which I believe from my conscience to be most true, and desire to mislead me into denying the faith of Christ and the true understanding of a most plain Scripture (as much as my conscience understands it). The power of the Pope is not against nor above, but for and under, the majesty of Scripture and truth; nor has the Pope received power to destroy the sheep, to cast them into the jaws of wolves, but to recall them to the truth, as befits a pastor and bishop, the Vicar of Christ. For this reason I feel that I am grieved and burdened, since I see that from such violence it will come to pass that no one may dare to confess even Christ himself, nor to preach the sacred Scriptures in his own church; and so that I also shall be forcibly thrust forth from a true, rational and Christian faith and understanding to empty and lying opinions of men, and driven to fables that mislead Christian people.

Therefore, from the aforesaid, our most holy lord Leo, not correctly advised, and above the pretended words, commission and judges, and their citation and process, and all that has followed or will follow thence, and from any whatsoever of them; and from whatever excommunications, suspension and sentences of interdict, condemnations, punishments and fines; and from whatever other denunciations and declarations (as they pretend) of heresy and apostasy, through them or one of them attempted, done and designed, or to be attempted, done or designed; and from the nullification of these things as it were by evil and unjust men who are entirely tyrannical and violent (their honor and reverence always excepted); also from whatever future troubles that can come to me from this, as well for myself as for all and each of my adherents and those wishing to be my adherents;—to the Council to meet legally and in a safe place, to which I or an advocate delegated by me can be free to go, and to him or those to whom I may be allowed by right, custom or privilege to call and appeal, in these writings I call and appeal, a first, a second, a third time; vehemently, more vehemently, most vehemently. I demand that notice of appeal [*apostolus*] be granted me, if there be any one who is willing and able to grant it to me; and especially I ask from you, master Notary, attestation. I protest against following out this appeal of mine through the way of nullification, abuse, unfairness or injustice; and besides, as is my right, I reserve to myself the option of adding, shortening, changing, correcting and improving it. And I retain for myself every benefit of law, and for my adherents and those who wish to adhere to me.

When indeed this document was set before me and the witnesses mentioned below (as is premised), he protested and kept protesting strongly that he could not go in person or by attorney to him from whom he stands appealed, both because of fear of the very many who are plotting against him and his life, and because of the danger of the journey. And so, with due earnestness he requested from me, the public notary, that there be given

and granted to him such notice of appeal as is his right according to law. According to his request, I gave him such notice as is his due, or at least such attestation as could be written in the form of a public document. Concerning all and each of these things, he sought of me, the public notary, written below, that one or more public documents be prepared.

These things were done at Wittenberg, the diocese of Brandenburg, in the year, indiction, day, month, and pontificate above-mentioned; in the reign of the godlike Maximilian, Emperor of the Romans, in the third hour or thereabouts, in the chapel of the Body of Christ, situated in the church-yard of the same parish; there being present also Christopher Beehr, by sacred Apostolic and Imperial authority Viscount of Constance, and Jerome Papiss, priest of the Court Diocese, witnesses alike called and demanded and required for the foregoing things.

IV

THE DECREE OF WORMS[1]

WE, Charles V., by God's grace elected Roman Emperor, always Augustus, King of Germany, Spain, both Sicilies, Jerusalem, Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, etc., Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Habsburg, Flanders and Tyrol, offer our grace and all good to all and several, Electors, Princes, spiritual and secular, prelates, counts, barons, knights, nobles, captains, governors, burgomasters, councillors, citizens and communities, also rectors and officers of all universities, and besides to all others of our realms and the Empire, who owe us obedience and loyalty for their dignities and lands, of whatsoever rank they may be, to whom this our imperial letter or a credible copy, certified by a spiritual prelate or a public notary may come or be announced.

1. Most reverend and honorable, illustrious, well-born and noble, dear friends, nephews, uncles, Electors, Princes, devoted and loyal: as it pertains to our office of Roman Emperor, not only to enlarge the bounds of the Holy Roman Empire which our fathers of the German nation founded for the defence of the holy Roman and Catholic Church, through the divine grace, with much shedding of blood; but also, according to the rule hitherto observed by the holy Roman Church, to take care that no stain or suspicion of heresy should contaminate our holy faith in the Roman Empire—or, if the same has already begun, to extirpate it with all necessary diligence, good means and discretion:

[1] The papal legate, Aleander, claims the authorship of this Edict: "Then I was commissioned by the Emperor and council to prepare the decree, with some little justification if I could, in order that people might be satisfied." (Dispatch of May 5. See Brieger, *Aleander und Luther*, Gotha, 1884 p. 178.) The internal evidence bears out the claim. Aleander prepared the original draft in Latin, and immediately had a translation made into German. The Emperor signed both documents, and therefore, however they might differ, no question could arise as to the superior authority of either text. As a matter of fact, they differ in no important respect. The Latin text may be found in Gerdsii *Historia Reformationis*, 2: Appendix, 34–47, while the German text is in Walch, 15: 2264–2280. In the following translation, the numbering of the paragraphs follows the Latin text. Both texts have been carefully compared throughout, and while in the main the German has been followed as the more concise and vigorous of the two, in the rendering of an occasional phrase or clause the Latin has been preferred.

2. Therefore we hold, that if such were the duty of any of our ancestors, much higher and greater is the obligation on us, inasmuch as the unparalleled goodness of Almighty God, for the protection and increase of his holy faith, has endowed us with more kingdoms and lands and greater power in the Empire, than any of our ancestors for many years [has possessed]. Moreover we are also sprung from the paternal stock of the Emperors and Archdukes of Austria, and Dukes of Burgundy; and from the maternal stock of the most faithful Kings of Spain, the Sicilies and Jerusalem—the memory of whose illustrious deeds, wrought for the Christian faith, will never pass away.

3. Wherefore, certain heresies, which sprang up in the German nation within the last three years, and afterwards were truly condemned by the Holy Councils and the papal decrees with the consent of the Catholic Church, and now are drawn anew from hell,—should we permit them to become more deeply rooted, [or] by our negligence conceal and bear with them, our conscience would be greatly burdened, and the eternal glory of our name would be covered by a dark cloud in the fortunate beginning of our reign.

4. Since now without doubt it is plain to you all, how far the errors and heresies depart from the Christian way, which a certain Martin Luther, of the Augustinian order, has sought to introduce and disseminate within the Christian religion and order, especially in the German nation, renowned as a perpetual destroyer of all unbelief and heresy; so that, unless it is speedily prevented, the whole German nation will be infected by this same disorder, and mighty dissolution and pitiable downfall of good morals, of the peace and Christian faith will result.

5. Because our holy father Pope Leo X, chief bishop of the holy Roman and Catholic Christian Church, to whom the care and oversight of things that appertain to the Christian faith especially belongs, has been not unjustly moved to warn and admonish the aforesaid Luther, at first in a fatherly and mild manner, to desist from so bad a beginning and to retract his circulated errors.

6. And as he failed to do that, and continually added further evil, his Holiness thought it well to take just and not unusual means and ways against him. And therefore many times[1] he assembled the cardinals, bishops and other prelates, also the priors and generals of the regular orders, and many other eminent and honorable men, of all renown, skill and learning, and besides he summoned and called many doctors and masters from other Christian nations, and thereto cited the aforesaid Martin Luther. And as he contumaciously remained away, all his writings, both in Latin and in German, published and yet to be published, were condemned as harmful and altogether hostile to the faith and unity of the Church, and by papal authority, with the advice and consent after mature consideration of the aforesaid Cardinals, bishops, prelates, doctors and masters, they were ordered to be everywhere burned and wholly destroyed.

7. And then—unless, within a prescribed time after the publication of the decree of his Holiness, he should show that he repented of his errors, and that he was converted and retracted them—according to the

[1] *Mehrmal*, Lat. *semel et iterum*—the first, but by no means the last, of the falsehoods in which this document abounds.

statutes of the law, he ordered and commanded the aforesaid Luther to be shunned by all, under the penalties contained in papal bulls as a son of disobedience and evil, as a schismatic and heretic. Which his Holiness, through his orator and nuncio, specially ordered and enjoined on us, as the true and chief Defender of the Christian faith, and the Advocate of the holy papal See and of the Roman and Catholic Christian Church; with desire and demand, according to our oath and in virtue of the authority and justice of our imperial office, that we give his Holiness in this emergency our aid of the secular sword, for the vindication of the Christian faith; and that everywhere in the Holy Roman Empire, also as befits a faithful Christian king and prince, in our hereditary kingdoms, principalities and lands, but especially in the German nation, we order and command all and single to hold inviolate what is contained in bulls of his Holiness, and to give execution and fulfilment to them.

8. And although, after the delivery of the papal bull and final condemnation of Luther, we announced that exhortation in many places in the German nation, as well as in our Burgundian lands, and especially enjoined on Cologne, Trier, Mainz, and Lüttich to obey and execute it, nevertheless, Martin Luther has taken no account of it, nor improved, nor revoked his errors, nor sought absolution from his papal Holiness and grace from the holy Christian Church, but like a madman plotting the manifest destruction of the holy Church, daily scatters abroad much worse fruit and effect of his depraved heart and mind, through very numerous books, both in Latin and German, composed by himself, or at least under his name, which are full of heresies and blasphemies, not only new but formerly condemned by holy Councils.

9. Therein he destroys, overturns, and injures the number, arrangement and use of the seven sacraments, so many years held by the holy Church, and in wondrous ways shamefully pollutes the indissoluble bonds of holy matrimony. He says also that holy unction is without efficacy. He desires also to adapt our use and enjoyment of the unutterably holy sacrament [the Latin adds: of the Lord's Supper] to the custom and use of the condemned Bohemians. And he begins to involve [in his errors] confession, which is most wholesome for the hearts that are polluted or laden with sins, so that no basis nor fruit can be received from it. Finally, he threatens to write so much further of confession (if that is allowed) that not only will almost all who have read his crazy writings dare to say that confession is useless, but also there will be few who do not declare that one should not confess.

10. He not only holds irreligious ideas concerning the priestly office and order, but also urges secular and lay persons to bathe their hands in the blood of priests; and he uses scurrilous and shameful words against the chief priest of our Christian faith, the successor of St. Peter and true Vicar of Christ on earth, and pursues him with manifold and unheard-of enmities and invectives. He confirms also from the heathen poets[1] that there is no free-will, because all things are settled by an immutable decree.

[1] This was a curious objection to emanate from the court of Rome during the Pontificate of Leo X. If half is true that is told, a heathen poet had more authority there than a Father, not to say an Evangelist. The chief confirmations of his doctrine of the will, cited by Luther from Augustine, provoked from Aleander nothing worse than a prudent silence.

11. And he writes that the Mass confers no benefit on him for whom it is celebrated. Moreover he overthrows the custom of fasting and prayer, established by the holy Church and hitherto maintained. Especially does he impugn the authority of the holy Fathers, as they are received by the Church, and wholly deprives them of obedience and authority. And everywhere his writings breathe out nothing else than sedition, destruction, war, slaughter, rapine, fire, and are fitted to cause the complete downfall of the Christian faith. Because he teaches a loose, self-willed life, severed from all laws and wholly brutish; and he is a loose, self-willed man, who condemns and rejects all laws; for he has had no fear or shame to burn publicly the decretals and canon laws. And if he had feared the secular sword no more than the ban and penalties of the Pope, he would have committed much worse offences against the civil law.

12. He does not blush to speak publicly against holy councils, and to abuse and insult them at will. Especially has he everywhere bitterly attacked the council of Constance with his foul mouth, and calls it a synagogue of Satan, to the shame and disgrace of the whole Christian Church and of the German nation. And all those who were members of it, and ordered John Hus to be burned for his heretical conduct—namely, our predecessor, Emperor Sigismund and the entire assembly of princes of the holy Empire—he calls antichrists, apostles of the devil, murderers and Pharisees. And he also says that everything condemned in the same council as Hussite error, was Christian and evangelical, and declares that he will prove this and defend it. [But the articles that the same council adopted, he will in no way accept.][1] And he has fallen into such madness of spirit as to boast, that if Hus were a heretic he is ten times a heretic.

13. And all the other innumerable wickednesses of Luther, for the sake of brevity, may remain unreckoned. This fellow appears to be not so much a man as a wicked demon in the form of men, clothed in monk's garb. He has assembled many heresies of the greatest condemned heretics, long since forgotten, together with some newly invented, in one stinking puddle, under pretext of preaching the faith, with which he commonly imagines that with so great industry he will destroy the true and genuine faith, and under the name and appearance of evangelical doctrine overturn and destroy all evangelical peace and love, as well as all order of good things and the most excellent hierarchy of the Church.

14. All this have we taken to heart, in view of the power of our imperial office and dignity with which we have been endowed by God; also of our love and attachment, which we like our predecessors have and bear toward the protection, upholding and defence of the Christian faith, as well as the honor of the Roman Bishop and holy See. And we consider, especially after the aforesaid admonition of papal Holiness, that it will not be possible for us to be careless in so great and frightful a matter, without great reproach to ourself and outrage and wrong to all Christendom. And we shall not do thus, such is not our will and disposition, but we wish rather to walk in the footsteps of our predecessors, the Roman Emperors, and emulate their illustrious deeds, by giving full protection to the Christian Church, and adhere to the excellent

[1] The sentence in brackets is wanting in the Latin text of the Edict.

regulations [*Ger. Constitutionen, Lat. constitutionibus*] made for the punishment and extirpation of heretics.

15. And now especially on account of these things we have again summoned here to Worms our and the holy Empire's Electors, Princes and Estates, and carefully examined the aforesaid matters with great diligence, as the evident necessity demands, and with unanimous advice and consent[1] we agreed to the following opinion and put it in form.

16. Although one so condemned and persisting in his hidden perversity, separated from the rites of the Christian Church and a manifest heretic, is denied a hearing under all laws;[2] nevertheless, to prevent all unprofitable dispute, as some openly contend that many books have been written and printed in Luther's name which he had not composed or published, and also others contend that it was but just before proceeding further against him, to hear Luther, to summon him before us with a safe-conduct; —we have therefore called him to our Court, and through our herald gave him a safe-conduct to come hither, in order that he might be questioned in our own presence and in that of the Electors, Princes and Estates of the Empire: whether he had composed the books which were then laid before his eyes as well as other books that are circulated in his name; and whether he would retract whatever is found in such books contrary to the holy Councils, decrees, usage and custom of our fathers as held to this day, and come again to the bosom and unity of the holy Church.

17. And there were bestowed upon him such entreaties and admonitions as might soften and overcome a man the most pertinacious and harder than a stone. And as soon as he heard these books, he acknowledged them as his own, and moreover declared that he would never deny them. And he also says that he has made many other books, which we have not mentioned herein because we have no knowledge of them.

18. But concerning the retractions, he begged time, and though this might justly have been denied him, since against innovation and error in the faith action should be taken without delay; and since from our summons, mandate and letters borne to him, both of which he undoubtedly received, he must clearly have understood for what reason he was summoned before us, and therefore should not have come before us and the Estates without an answer made ready; nevertheless, from considerations of graciousness and kindness we granted him another day.

19. And on the next day he again appeared before us and the Estates of the Empire. And, as before, he was entreated with diligent exhortation to reconsider: with our promise that if he would retract the things in his books that should be condemned, he should again come into grace and kindness of our holy Father, the Pope; and we would see to it that his Holiness should choose from each Christian nation two men of good life and great learning to examine his books diligently, and to remove the evil therefrom, and whatever was found good that should the papal Holiness approve.

[1] On this falsehood, see final note appended to this document.

[2] Another astonishing falsehood. Charles, before his coronation at Aachen, October 23, 1520, had been compelled to sign a "capitulation" in thirty-four articles, one of the most important of which was that he would place no one under the ban of the Empire without a hearing or without just cause. (Beard, *Life of Martin Luther*, 318.)

20. But after all this he would not make any retraction, nor would he accept our gracious offer, but rejected it altogether; and, with such improper words and behavior as were not at all fitting for a rational and orderly priest [*Geistlichen, religiose*], he declared openly that he would not change a word in his books except he were convinced by disputations, which he desired in reliance on our safe-conduct, notwithstanding he well knows that they are forbidden by divine and human laws. He also in our presence and that of the Estates, uncharitably and arrogantly ridiculed, condemned, slandered and altogether despised the holy councils,[1] especially that of Constance which to the eternal honor of the German nation restored to it peace and unity.

21. And although upon such a rude answer—which was not heard by us and the Estates, without depression of mind, and the irritation of the common people—we had determined for several reasons immediately to take further measures to send him away and let him go home forthwith; and this opinion having been put in writing was made public next day.[2] Nevertheless, we were moved by the honorable request of the Electors, Princes and Estates, to give him three days additional time in which to change his mind.

22. And in the meantime, two electors, two spiritual and two civil princes, and two representatives of our imperial cities, were appointed at the request and command of the Diet, to cite the said Luther before them, and if possible and convenient, to leave nothing undone to convert him by good warning, exhortation and instruction; and, in case he should not change his mind, to show him what severe punishment would be visited upon him by us and the holy Empire according to direction of the laws.

23. And since such diligence and seriousness were unfruitful with him, one of our Electors took two kind and skilful Doctors and together with them and by himself, not only with much exhortation but also with plain demonstration endeavored to persuade him that Luther's errors are many; that he should regard more than his own opinion our holy father Pope, and also us and the Estates of the Empire, and the customs of other Christ-believing nations, which they have observed according to the order of Christian Churches for so many years. And in addition they told him that if he would give up his self-will and turn again, he would discover such conduct to be in accord with the honorable example of many holy Fathers, and would be for the preservation of his soul, honor and body.

24. Upon this, as we have been credibly informed, Martin Luther replied that he not only doubted and suspected all the persons just mentioned, but also an ecumenical council (though it be unanimous); and that he would not change the least syllable in his writings—as also he previously declared before us and the Estates of the Empire—except he

[1] This paragraph is of outrageous slander all compact. For what Luther actually did say at the Diet, see the *Acta* in LOL, 6: 6 *seq.* Walch, 15: 1018 *seq.*; also reprinted by Förstemann, *Neues Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der evangelischen Kirchen-Reformation* (Hamburg, 1842). For an excellent summary in English, see Beard, 436–441.

[2] This is the original of the Edict, closely followed as to main points in the final document. It is reprinted by Förstemann, p. 75 *seq.*; Walch, 15: 2235–2237. It was in French, and written by Charles himself, but was accompanied by a German translation.

were convinced by learned men. But this must be done according to his rule, and not from the councils or from imperial or Christian laws, nor by the authority of any of the Fathers, no matter how holy, but only by the words of the Holy Scriptures;—which he thinks must be understood according to his own ideas and to the satisfaction of his uncertain opinions [*Gemuths, opiniones*]. But it is perfectly clear that by the said authorities [*i. e.*, the Fathers] completing what is implied or expressed in both Testaments, the holy Christian Church has hitherto been governed.

25. Because these things are so transacted, and Martin Luther yet persists obstinately and perversely in maintaining his heretical opinions; therefore, all pious and God-fearing persons shall abominate and abhor him as one mad or possessed by a demon. According to the tenor of our letters concerning his safety, we commanded him to depart from our sight by April 25; and again we sent him a herald to say that from the aforesaid 25th of April he may reckon the twenty days next following, during which he will have our safe-conduct, at the expiration of which twenty days he shall be under our protection no longer. And thereupon it will be in order to proceed to other appropriate remedies against this severe, virulent disease, as follows:

26. In the first place, for the praise and glory of Almighty God, and the defence of the Christian faith, also of the Roman Pontiff and the honor due the Apostolic See, by the authority and power of our dignity and office of Emperor, together with the unanimous will and consent[1] of our and the holy Empire's Electors, Princes and Estates, now here assembled, for the perpetual remembrance of this affair, for the execution of the decree, judgment and condemnation according to the bull that our father the Pope has published as the proper judge of these things, we have declared and made known the said Martin Luther shall hereafter be held and esteemed by each and all of us as a limb cut off from the Church of God, an obstinate schismatic and manifest heretic.

27. And we give public attestation by these letters that we order and command each and several of you, as you owe faith to us and the holy Empire, and would escape the penalties of the crime of treason, and the ban and over-ban[2] of the Empire, and moreover deprivations of all royal dues, fiefs, privileges and immunities, which up to this time you have in any way obtained from our predecessors, ourself and the holy Empire;—commanding, we say, by the Roman and imperial majesty, we strictly desire that immediately after the expiration of the appointed twenty days, terminating on the 14th day of May, you shall not give the aforesaid Martin Luther house, hospitality, lodging, food, drink, neither shall anyone, by word or deed, secretly or openly, succor or assist him by counsel or help; but in whatever place you meet him, you shall proceed against him; if you have sufficient force, you shall take him prisoner and keep him in close custody; either you shall bring him or cause him to be brought, at least let us know where he may be captured; in the meanwhile you shall keep him closely imprisoned until you receive notice from us what further to do, according to the direction of the laws.

[1] Same old lie. See also paragraphs 33 and 37.

[2] The ban, *Acht*, was the declaration of civil outlawry, as the excommunication deprived one of all ecclesiastical rights. The *Aberacht*, or *Ueberacht*, over-ban, double-ban was originally a second and more severe declaration of outlawry.

And for such holy and pious work we will make you rich compensation for your labors and expenses.

28. In like manner [you shall proceed] against his friends, adherents, patrons, maintainers, abettors, sympathizers, emulators, and followers. And the property of these, personal or real, in the strength of the holy constitution and of our imperial ban and over-ban, you shall treat in this way, namely, overthrow and seize it [and] transfer it to our custody, no one hindering or impeding—unless he shall abandon his unrighteous way and secure papal absolution.

29. Henceforth we decree to all, and to each private individual, under the penalties already prescribed, that no one shall dare to buy, sell, read, preserve, copy, print, or cause to be copied or printed, any books of the aforesaid Martin Luther, condemned by our holy father Pope, as aforesaid, or any other writings in German or Latin hitherto composed by him, since [they are] foul, harmful, suspected, and published by a notorious and stiff-necked heretic. Neither shall any dare to approve his opinions, nor to proclaim, defend or assert them, in any other way that human ingenuity can invent—notwithstanding he may have put some good in them to deceive the simple man.

30. For the most wholesome foods, if they are tainted by a little drop of poison, are shunned by all men; so much more books and writings, imbued with a thousand deadly and pestiferous poisons for the soul, are not only to be shunned by you all, but moreover to be driven from the memory of men and altogether abolished, lest they bring harm to some one or death. · Because all things rightly and laudably inserted in those books, received and approved hitherto by the holy Fathers and the Catholic Church, are frequently used, introduced and expounded where they may be found, read and drawn from without solicitude, suspicion or danger of any evil.

31. Furthermore, we decree that all and several—of whatever dignity, rank, order or station they may be, and especially those who have and wield authority, under the aforesaid penalties, everywhere in the Roman Empire and our hereditary principalities and lands—shall take stringent measures, punish, command; that they burn with fire each and all of the aforesaid infected writings and books of Luther, that cause so great uproar, damage, schism and heresy in the Church of God; and that by these and other methods they utterly abolish, extirpate and annihilate them. In like manner, respecting petitions and requisitions, with all diligent and good faith you ought to assist and serve the nuncios of the blessed Pontiff and their chosen emissaries; and none the less in their absence you ought to execute and fulfill, to do and act according to our command and mandate.

32. In the meantime, we give strict command by these letters to all other subjects and loyal people, both ours and those of the Empire, as well as those in our hereditary principalities and lands, that the aforesaid officers and magistrates shall render aid and obedience with promptness and alacrity, under penalty of the prescribed punishment, fines and castigations.

33. Since evident necessity compels, in order to foresee and prevent, it is required that no books of Luther—or harmful passages culled from them, or editions with the author's name suppressed, or interwoven with

other writings, nor many other books that we are compelled to mention with sorrowful mind, for the most part made and printed in Germany and full of evil teaching and example—shall be further printed: so that through reading them Christian believers may no longer be led into error concerning faith, life and good morals, and that scandal, envy, hatred may not spring up in the Churches of God, which has only been too apparent hitherto and daily becomes greater, so that kingdoms and realms shall, it is feared, come into commotion, division and disobedience. Moreover, in order to extinguish this madness, with the counsel and consent of the Electors, Princes and Estates, under the aforesaid heavy penalties, fines and punishments, as Emperor and hereditary Lord, we decree once more to all our subjects and those of the Empire, and of our hereditary principalities and lands, that no one of you shall have such harmful and poisonous books, nor other extracts or transcripts, that contain errors against our holy faith and what the Catholic Church has hitherto held.

34. Furthermore, hostile and abusive writings against our holy father Pope, prelates, Princes, universities and their faculties, and other honorable persons, and whatever contains anything contrary to good morals and the holy Roman Church, shall no longer be composed, written, printed, illustrated, sold, bought, preserved secretly or publicly, or caused to be written, printed or illustrated, nor in any other imaginable way shall they connive or permit this to be done.

35. Likewise under the penalties indicated, we strictly command all who ordain and administer justice, that on the authority of this our Edict, they shall seize, tear in pieces and burn such writings, books, tracts and pictures, hitherto made and written, whosoever be their owner or wheresoever they be found throughout the whole Empire and our hereditary dominions.

36. Also, authors, writers, printers, and artists, as well as purchasers and sellers of such foul writings, books, tracts and pictures, after the promulgation of our present imperial decree, and those persisting or contriving something anew, if it becomes known—you may seize and appropriate to yourselves, wherever you may be able to obtain them, their substance, goods and privileges. This liberty is conceded you by law, and for any injury inflicted you will not be obliged to answer to the law.

37. Lastly, to the end that, with present evils also occasions for future heresies may be prevented and altogether removed, and that poison introduced by the authors of these books may not be further disseminated and that the most worthy art of printing may hereafter be employed only for noble and worthy purposes; therefore, of our imperial and royal power and knowledge, with the unanimous advice of our imperial Electors, Princes and Estates, we have commanded under the imperial ban and over-ban, and the other penalties aforesaid; and do command, deliberately, by the power of this our Edict, to which we have given the sanction of inviolable law, that hereafter no book-printer or any other person whosoever or wherever he be, in the Holy Roman Empire or in our hereditary dominions, principalities and lands, shall print for the first time or reprint any books or writings in which there is anything that treats of the Christian faith, little or much; unless with the knowledge and consent of the bishop of the diocese, or his vicar, together with the permission of the

theological faculty of an adjoining university. But other books, in whatever faculty and whatever they treat, shall be printed, sold, or caused to be printed or sold, with the knowledge and consent of the bishop, and not otherwise.

38. But if anyone, of whatever dignity, rank or title he may be, shall wilfully contravene or transgress this our Christian and imperial order, decree, mandate, law and statute, which shall be kept altogether inviolable in one or more of the preceding articles concerning the matter of Luther or printing, in any way that men's minds may invent, we annul and make such action void. As to such we will that they shall be prosecuted and dealt with according to the preceding penalties, as well as those contained in the laws, and according to the form and process of the excommunication, and of the imperial ban and over-ban. [Let everyone know how to order himself accordingly.][1]

And in order that all this may be done and credit given, we have sealed this document with out imperial seal, which has been affixed in our holy imperial city of Worms, on the eighth day of May,[2] after the birth of Christ, 1521, in the second year of our reign over the Roman Empire, and over other lands the sixth.

V

AGAINST THE MURDERING AND ROBBING BANDS OF THE PEASANTS[3]

IN the preceding book I had no occasion to condemn the peasants, because they promised to yield to law and better instruction, as Christ also demands (Matt. 7 : 1). But before I can turn around, they go out and appeal to force, in spite of their promise, and rob and pillage and act

[1] Words in brackets not in the Latin text.

[2] That the Edict was signed and sealed on May 8th, is a deliberate falsehood. Nothing is better established regarding the whole transaction than that the signature was affixed May 26, the day after the final adjournment of the Diet. It is also fully established that the proposed law was never laid before the Diet, but was read to a part of the Electors and a few other princes at a private conference with the Emperor. Prince-elector Joachim, of Brandenburg, took it upon himself then to say that the Edict would have the assent of all the Estates, and for obvious reasons there was no dissenting voice. But as none of the Estates as a matter of fact did give its assent, never even had the document before them for action, it is evident that the Edict was promulgated on the sole authority of the Emperor. It is as clear as any proposition in constitutional law can be, that the document never had the force of law in the Empire. The above conclusions are substantially identical with those of Ranke, in his *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation.* Berlin, 1881, 1: 342 *seq.* For the documents on which they rest, see Brieger, especially pp. 218, 219. Most of Aleander's dispatches are in Italian; for a brief summary of them in English, see Beard, *Life of Martin Luther*, 452–454. There has naturally been a hot controversy as to the meaning of many of the facts—whether, for example, this antedating of the Edict was with fraudulent intent, to give the impression that it was signed and promulgated before the Diet had begun to disperse, and therefore presumptively by unanimous consent, as is frequently and falsely asserted in the document. Two electors, Frederick, of Saxony, and the Count Palatine, had departed by May 23. For a full discussion of this question, see 1 KG, 9: 120 *seq.*, 132 *seq.* Janssen denies that the document was antedated at all, on the curious ground that Aleander's dispatch of May 8th shows the draft to have been completed at that date. (*Geschichte des Deutschen Volks*, Freiburg, 1897, 2: 184, note 4.) But laws are dated not from the day of their drafting, but from that on which they are enacted and signed.

[3] This tract may be found in LDS, 24: 257 *seq.*, and Walch, 15: 58 *seq.*

as mad dogs. From this it is quite apparent what they had in their false minds, and that what they put forth under the name of the Gospel in the Twelve Articles has become vain pretenses. In short, they practice mere devil's work, especially that arch-devil who reigns at Mühlhausen, who indulges in nothing else than robbery, murder and bloodshed; hence, Christ in John 8 : 44 says concerning him that he is a murderer from the beginning. Since, therefore, those peasants and miserable wretches willingly go astray and act differently from what they declared, I likewise must write differently concerning them; and first bring their sins before their eyes as God commands (Isa. 58 : 1 ; Eze. 2 : 7), whether perchance some might know themselves and accordingly submit to secular authority as they ought. With three-fold horrible sins against God and men have these peasants loaded themselves, for which they have deserved a manifold death of body and soul.

First, they have sworn to their true and gracious rulers to be submissive and obedient, in accord with God's command (Matt. 22 : 21), "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and (Rom. 13 : 1), "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." But since they have deliberately and with outrage abandoned obedience, and in addition have opposed their lords, they have thereby forfeited body and soul, as perfidious, perjured, mendacious, disobedient, rascals and villains are wont to do. Wherefore St. Paul judges them, saying (Rom. 13 : 2), "And they that resist shall receive to themselves condemnation." The peasants will incur this sentence, be it sooner or later, for God will keep truth and pledge.

Second, they cause uproar, outrageously rob and pillage monasteries and castles not belonging to them. For this alone, as public highwaymen and murderers, they deserve a two-fold death of body and soul. It is right and lawful to slay at the first opportunity a rebellious person, known as such, already under God and the Emperor's ban. For of a public rebel, every man is both judge and executioner. Just as, when a fire starts, he who can extinguish it first is the best fellow. Rebellion is not a vile murder, but like a great fire that kindles and devastates a country; hence uproar carries with it a land full of murder, bloodshed, makes widows and orphans, and destroys everything, like the greatest calamity. Therefore, whosoever can should smite, strangle and stab, secretly or publicly, and should remember that there is nothing more poisonous, pernicious and devilish than a rebellious man. Just as when one must slay a mad dog; fight him not and he will fight you, and a whole country with you.

Third, they screen such frightful and horrible sins with the Gospel, call themselves Christian brethren, swear allegiance and oath and compel people to join them in such cruelties. Thereby they become the greatest blasphemers and violators of God's holy name, and serve and honor the devil under the semblance of the Gospel, so that they have ten times deserved death of body and soul, for I never heard of more detestable sins. And I believe also that the devil perceives the judgment day, that he undertakes such an unheard-of job. As if he said, "It is the last," therefore he should be and will his worst to stir the dregs and entirely clear the ground. May the Lord restrain him! Lo, how mighty a prince the devil is, how he has the world in his hands and can put it to

confusion, who can so soon capture so many thousands of peasants, lead them astray, harden and rouse them, and is able to make them willing executioners of his malice. It is no excuse for these peasants to plead 1 Mo. 1 : 23, 2 : 5, maintaining that all things were created free and common, and that all of us were baptized in like manner. For in the New Testament Moses has no place; there our Lord and Master stands, and casts us with body and goods under the superiors and civil law, as he says (Matt. 22 : 2) "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." So also says St. Paul (Rom. 13 : 1) to all baptized Christians, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." And thus likewise St. Peter enjoins (1 Pet. 2 : 13), "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." This teaching of Christ we are bound to live up to, since the Father commanded from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." (Matt. 17 : 5; Mark 9 : 7; Luke 9 : 35.)

Now baptism does not make free body and goods, but soul. Moreover the Gospel does not aim at a community of goods, though such as desire this may have it, like the apostles and disciples (cf. Acts 4 : 32) who did not demand that the goods of Pilate or Herod should be common, as our senseless peasants rage, but their own goods. But our peasants would have the goods of others common, and keep their own for themselves; these are indeed fine Christians! I deem that there is no more devil in hell, but he has altogether rushed into the peasants; their rage is excessive and beyond all measure.

Since, therefore, the peasants have thus incurred the wrath of God and men, and are already guilty of a manifold death of both body and soul, since they are despisers of right and law and do continue in using violence, I must inform secular authority how with good conscience it ought to deal with them. First, if the civil government thinks proper to smite and punish those peasants without previous consideration of right and fairness, I do not condemn such action, although it is not in harmony with the Gospel, for it has good right to do this. Inasmuch as the peasants no longer fight for the Gospel's sake, but have become rather faithless, perjured, disobedient, seditious murderers, robbers, blasphemers, which even a heathen government has right and power to punish—yea, is even bound to punish such rogues. Since for that reason it wields the sword and is God's minister unto him who does evil. (Rom. 13 : 4.)

But government, if it is Christian and permits the Gospel, since also the peasants have no pretext against it, they should behave with awe toward it. First of all we should depend on God, and confess that we have deserved this calamity, and recognize that God has perhaps sent the devil for the general punishment of the German nation. Therefore we ought humbly to ask God for help against the devil. For we do not only wrestle against flesh and blood, but against evil spirits and powers in the air, which must be attacked with prayer (Eph. 6 : 12, 18). When the heart is set right toward God so that one lets his divine will rule, whether he wishes or does not wish us to have princes and lords, we must to superfluity oppose to these crazy peasants right and justice, even if they are not worthy of it. Thereafter, if this will not avail, hasten to grasp the sword.

For a prince or lord must remember that he is God's steward and the

executor of his wrath (Rom. 13 : 4), the sword is committed to him for such villains, and that he sins just as greatly against God, if he does not punish and restrain, as one to whom the sword has not been entrusted if he murders. For when he can punish and does not, should there be in consequence murder or bloodshed he is guilty of all the murder and evil that such rascals commit; since he voluntarily, through neglect of his divine charge, permits such baseness to be done, therefore he much increases it and is guilty. Therefore let him not sleep! Nor show mercy and compassion. Nay, this is the time of sword and wrath, not the time of mercy.

Let the civil power press on confidently and strike as long as it can move a muscle. For here is the advantage: the peasants have bad consciences and unlawful goods, and whenever a peasant is killed therefore he has lost body and soul, and goes forever to the devil. Civil authority, however, has a clean conscience and lawful goods, and can say to God with all security of heart: "Behold, my God, thou hast appointed me prince or lord, of that I cannot doubt, and hast entrusted me with the sword against evil doers (Rom. 13 : 4). It is thy word and may not lie; therefore I must fulfil my duty or lose thy grace. It is plain that these peasants have deserved a manifold death, from thee and from the world, and me thou hast commanded to punish them. Willest thou now to let me perish through them, and to take away from me the rule, and to let me be destroyed? Well, then! thy will be done; let me die then, and go in thy trust and word, and be found in obedience to thy trust and my duty. Therefore I will punish and smite as long as I can move a muscle; thou wilt judge and approve."

Therefore it can come to pass that he who will be slain on the side of civil government, may be a real martyr before God, if he fights in such conscience as has been said. For he goes in the divine word and obedience. On the contrary, whoever shall perish on the side of the peasants is an eternal hell-brand. For he wields the sword against God's word and obedience, and is a limb of the devil.

And should it seem likely that the peasants prevail (may God forbid)—for all things are possible to God, and we do not know whether he may not be at the beginning of the judgment day, which will not be far off; he may purpose through the devil to destroy all order and authority, and turn the world into a wild chaos—then will he safely go to ruin with a good conscience who shall be found in his sword-duty, and leave to the devil the earthly kingdom and receive instead the eternal kingdom. Such wonderful times are these that a prince can more easily win heaven by shedding blood than others with prayers.

Finally there is one more point worthy of consideration by the civil power. The peasants are not satisfied to belong to the devil themselves, but they force and urge many pious people unwillingly to join their devilish union (*Bund*), and make them thus partners in their wickedness and condemnation. For whosoever joins them goes with them to the devil and is guilty of all the evil deeds they commit; and must do so because he is of so weak faith that he cannot withstand. A hundred deaths should a pious Christian suffer ere he yields a hair's breadth in this peasant's business. Oh, many can become martyrs now through these bloodthirsty peasants and prophets of murder!

Now on such captives among the peasants the civil authority should have mercy; and if besides they have no goods, if they cheerfully let the sword take its course against the peasants, and risk their own body and fortune, then are these reasons more than enough why one should save and help such souls, who through the peasants have been driven into such a devilish confederacy, and against their wills must sin with them so horribly and be condemned. For such souls are [going] straight for purgatory, yea, to hell and devil's chains.

Therefore dear lords, redeem here, save here, help here, have mercy on these poor peasants, stab, strike, strangle, whoever can. Remainest thou therefore dead? Well for you, for a more pious death nevermore canst thou obtain. For thou diest in obedience to God's word and to duty (Rom. 13 : 1), and in the service of love, to deliver thy neighbor out of hell and the devil's chains.

So, I pray you now, flee from the peasants whoever can, as from the devil himself. But those who do not flee, I pray that God would enlighten and convert them. But those who cannot be converted, God grant that they may have no fortune and success. Here every pious Christian may say, Amen! For that the prayer is right and good, and pleases God well, that know I. Should anyone think it too severe, let him remember that rebellion is intolerable, and let him watch at all hours for the destruction of the world.

VI

THE PROTEST AT SPEYER[1]

Most illustrious King, most venerable, right honorable, noble, esteemed, gracious Lords, uncles, cousins, friends, and especially esteemed ones!

According as we ourselves urged upon his Roman imperial Majesty, our most gracious Lord, and wrote in a friendly manner to your royal Highness,—in most submissive obedience to his imperial Majesty and in friendly and humble obedience to your royal Highness, as well as for the good of general Christendom and the holy Empire, we have come hither to this Diet, and have now heard read the instructions, together with the authoritative letter in his imperial Majesty's name. Moreover, we have also examined with diligence the Summons of this Diet in [the name of] his imperial Majesty, and we find that the affair has been settled by an embarrassing device, that the article in the decree of the previously

[1] The text followed is that given by Ney, in his *Geschichte des Reichstages zu Speier im Jahre 1529* (Hamburg, 1880), pp. 240–254. The protest will be found also in Walch, 16: 315 *seq.* Liberal extracts are given by Gieseler, 4: 131. The readings of Walch and Gieseler differ at many points from the text of Ney, but the discrepancies are not important, and it has not been thought worth while to collate the texts. A partial translation of the document may be found in Merle d'Aubigné, bk xiii., ch. vi. Though the protest itself bears date April 20, most critics agree in making the true date April 25 (Schaff, 6: 691). The author of the document is believed to have been George Vogler, the chancellor of the Margrave of Brandenburg (Ney, 237). To render its cumbrous phrases and long involved sentences into intelligible English, without making a mere paraphrase, is a most difficult task. A single sentence, and that perhaps not the worst, runs to over 300 words, and has fourteen relative and adverbial clauses!

held Diet[1] concerning our holy Christian faith has been annulled, and another very troublesome article is to be set forth instead;

And whereas your royal Highness, and your other colleagues (having authority as his imperial Majesty), governors and commissioners, with the estates of the Empire, at the Diet formerly held at Speyer unanimously agreed that pending a general Council or national assembly, each one should live, rule and act regarding the clauses of the Edict of Worms as every one hopes and trusts to give account for his conduct before God and his imperial Majesty. Moreover, your royal Highness, together with the fellow-commissioners in the stead of his imperial Majesty, at the adoption of the aforesaid decree promised to hold all and sundry (so it stands written in the said decree and his imperial Majesty may examine) as fixed and inviolable, to execute it, to give prompt and unquestioning compliance, to do and permit nothing contrary to it, to live by it, and not permit anyone to do otherwise save at all perils;

And moreover, your lieges, we and other estates of the Empire, publicly proclaimed in the decree that each and every point was carried with our entire knowledge, consent and advice; also that we all and severally acquiesced in the same, and in right, good, true and faithful manner spoke and pledged ourselves to hold every point and article in the decree as true, fixed, sound, upright and inviolable, to execute it, to comply with it to the best of our ability, and to live by it, without perils—all of which is contained in the aforesaid decree in clear, explicit words;

Therefore, in consideration of this previously settled, written and sealed decree, as well as for the following well-founded reasons (which in part were sent in writing to your royal Highness and the esteemed ones on the 12th day of this month of April), we cannot and may not consent to the annulment of the aforesaid articles, to which we unanimously agreed and which we are pledged to uphold, nor even to the supposed or intended moderation of the same, which yet is nothing of the sort.

For the first of our well-founded reasons, we therefore think it beyond question that his imperial Majesty—as an honorable, upright and Christian Emperor, our most gracious Lord—and the majority also of you, the other princes, having once agreed in mind and will, pledged, written and sealed, would no less than we hold [the decree] to the letter as perpetual, fixed and inviolable, execute it and not scruple at anything therein, neither be nor act against it. Therein we desire and seek honor, praise, forbearance and justice, not only our own but first of all his imperial Majesty's, and for all of us.

As to others, we do not know in what way to answer such with a good conscience toward Almighty God as the sole Lord, Ruler and Upholder of our holy Christian saving faith, as well as toward his imperial Majesty as a Christian Emperor.

For although we know that our ancestors, brothers and we, all that we ourselves were in duty bound to do, in due obedience to the deceased and now reigning Roman imperial Majesties, all that might ever have promoted the honor, welfare and interests of his imperial Majesty and the Empire—that, with all true, ready and willing submission we have always done, in such manner as we, without boasting and without dis-

[1] This refers to the Diet at Speyer in 1526, as the next paragraph shows. The decree is given in Walch's, 16: 266 *seq.*

paragement of others, never knew anybody before to give. As moreover, without sparing body or goods, we will willingly and obediently do henceforth till our end and grave, with the help of divine grace, in all due and practicable things toward Roman imperial Majesty, as our most gracious Lord,—also toward your royal Highness and lieges, as our dear and gracious lords, uncles, cousins, friends and other Estates of the holy Roman Empire, have kindly, graciously and impartially willed and inclined to do.

Yet there are nevertheless such things as concern the glory of God and the welfare and salvation of the souls of every one of us; as to these, by the command of God, for the sake of our consciences, we are in baptism and moreover in his holy divine word, pledged and bound to hold before all our Lord and God as highest King and Lord of lords. Our undoubting confidence is that your royal Highness and princes will therefore kindly hold us excused in respect to the things in which we are not at one with your Highness, princes and others. Nor in such things will we obey the majority, for the reason that we hold them in conformity to the former imperial decree at Speyer, which by a unanimous consent (and not by a majority only) was then decided. Wherefore also, such a unanimous vote cannot and may not be altered with honor, reason and justice, except by unanimous consent. Besides also, in matters concerning the honor of God, the welfare and salvation of our souls, each stand for himself and must give account before God. Therefore in this sphere no one can make it another's duty to do or decide less or more, which one is not bound to do for other honest, well-founded and good reasons.

So that your Highness, princes and others, each and all whom this transaction might affect, have our complaint to hear once more and exactly, so that it is open as the day and not to be questioned: that, concerning the doctrine of our Christian religion there has been for a long time hitherto discord over many points and articles. Whence such discord proceeded, that God knows first of all, to whose judgment we commit all things. But it confessedly arose in part at the Diet of Nürnberg [1522], through the papal legate, in consequence of his solicitation and orders then made and delivered; likewise besides through many electors, princes and other estates of the Empire, who at least in part are of your party. So then, at the aforesaid Diet of Nürnberg, all our grievances were set forth by the temporal estates of the Empire in eighty articles, and delivered to the said papal legate, and likewise afterward appeared in print.[1] Nevertheless the same grievances are not yet abolished, and yet many more of them are before our eyes.

And it has always been considered at all Diets, that a fitting limit for this matter could not be found, unless a free ecumenical, Christian council, or at least national assembly, should be held as soon as possible. And this we now declare, in order that your Highness, princes, and the others, each and every one, may judge from this and may yourselves appoint when it seems right or proper for one party to seek before a free, Christian,

[1] This is the document commonly known as the *Centum Gravamina*, the original eighty articles having been expanded into a hundred. A summary of this interesting document is given by Häusser, *Period of the Reformation*, p. 70; and all the important articles may be found, either in Lord Herbert's *Henry VIII*, pp. 125–133, or in Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 4: 308–314. The full document in German is in Walch, 15: 2146.

general Council approval or condemnation of the doctrine which it holds as Christian. These matters cannot be so fully and formally discussed and treated by presidents, commissioners, orators, appointed by his imperial Majesty, or by electors, princes and other estates of the Empire, as by the said Council. Nor could the discordant and doubtful doctrines and practices, of which they themselves are now not certain, be heard and decided.

Moreover that such things would now be imposed on us, not silently but openly, it is easy to understand from the following account:

For thus have several in Committee first proposed to you, and on the 10th day of this month of April it was read a second time; likewise in several other points have they set forth changed ideas, that the electors themselves, princes and other estates (among whom we equally, dear princes and others, were included and intended) now had decided here with one another: that those who thus far abide by the formerly established imperial Edict[1] now henceforth continue by the self-same Edict until the next Council, and their subjects ought to propose to hold thereto, etc. That does not hold us, as it does them, to such Edict in all points with good conscience, nor may we execute it, [for this would be] in the highest degree burdensome. And we should have nothing to answer before God, should anybody, of high or lower rank, through our mutual decision separate from the doctrine which from the fundamental counsel of the eternal word of God we consider without doubt to be godly and Christian, and against our own conscience, as we have said above, should come under the said Edict.

But we understand ourselves not at all to call in question what your Highness, or any of you princes and the others, outside of our announced joint agreement or resolution, in conformity with the Edict or otherwise, shall hold each for himself and with his [subjects]. But we shall daily and heartily beseech God that he will give divine grace to each and all of us, that he may enlighten us with right, true knowledge, that he will give his Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth; through which we may come with unanimity to a just, true, life-attaining, saving Christian faith, through Christ, our only Mercy-seat, Mediator, Advocate and Saviour. Amen.

For according as discord is evident before our eyes, and through the opposition of parties it is known that it has sprung from that cause, also by the aforementioned opposition it has become established so that doctrines are contested among us in many articles touched upon in the imperial Edict, each and all may easily conclude, if we should agree with your Highness, princes and the rest in the belief comprised [in the Edict], as a result it would be enjoined on us that, against our own consciences, we ourselves should now condemn as unjust the doctrines that we have thus far held to be unquestionably Christian and still think to be such, as long as we agree that the imperial Edict against them shall have force.

Which then besides will be more clearly perceived from the appended clause to be a contradiction; which also reads: "And again, in the other states, in which the other doctrines arose, and in part might not be suppressed without noticeable disturbances, complaints and perils,

[1] The reference here is to the Edict of Worms, and so in the following paragraphs.

yet henceforth all further innovations shall be prevented, so far as is humanly possible, until the coming Council," etc. So then each and all might therefrom argue, if we had known through such an Edict that our Christian doctrine, belief and attitude were so erroneous, though they might be established without marked disturbance, complaints and perils, that it should seem reasonable for us at least implicitly to admit that we have articles in our faith either not well grounded, or else unnecessary. But the one (though we shall be otherwise instructed at the coming Council or in some other way by the holy, pure, divine, biblical Scripture) at the present time we do not at all know how to say or do. As to the other, if not only implicitly but openly we deny our Lord and Saviour Christ and his holy Word, which beyond all doubt we hold to be pure, clear, clean and right, and do not confess that he has redeemed us from sin, death, the devil and hell, it will give the Lord Christ ground also to deny us before his Heavenly Father, as he terribly threatens in the Gospel all who do not openly and freely confess before men him and his holy Word. Thus the true confession consists not in empty words alone, but in deed, as may be further proved without difficulty.

Every Christian gentleman can without difficulty think and understand to what damnable vexation and ruin such a course would lead, not only among our own Christian good-hearted subjects, but among those of the opposite party, if they heard that we had agreed with you that you should abide by the Edict and your subjects also hold thereto. So, though Almighty God should illumine anyone by the knowledge of his only saving Word, we should not dare to accept the same. As also some magistrates of your party might understand, by that to make excuse for their subjects, that had we made such an agreement with you, so therefore they must hold and do.

Should we also agree with you, that those who up to this time have stood by the Edict should henceforth abide by it until the coming Council, etc., we should acknowledge not only that the opinion of your party is right, but also that the Edict is still in existence. Nevertheless, it was suspended and annulled by the decree of the former Diet of Speyer; so that every State in the Empire, in such matters as concern the Edict, may live and rule for itself and its people as it hopes to answer for itself, first of all before God and his imperial Majesty. Therefore we cannot let ourselves be longer burdened with such an unmerited yoke of the Edict.

We have no doubt also, should this not be the will of his imperial Majesty, that we shall, as we hope and trust, give a true, sound answer for our doctrines, lives, governments, conduct and actions regarding such matters, before Almighty God and his imperial Majesty, as a Christian Emperor.

So with reference to the articles touching the masses,[1] there is the same and much more trouble. For we have no doubt that you have heard

[1] The article of the proposed decree above referred to was as follows: "And especially sundry doctrines and sects, so many as are opposed to the venerable sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the German nation shall not receive among the States of the holy Empire, nor hereafter openly favor or permit them to preach; in like manner they shall not do away with the services of the holy mass; also no one, in the places where the new doctrines have got the upper hand, shall forbid or hinder the celebration or hearing of mass, or persecute therefor." The full text of the decree is in Walch, 16: 328 *seq.*

how our ministers attacked and completely refuted the papal masses, with holy, divine, invincible, constant Scripture; how also, on the other hand, they have justified the noble, precious Supper of our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ (as the evangelical mass is called) according to the appointment and example of Christ, our only Master, and the usage of his holy Apostles. Should we now uphold or consent to such a resolution as has been arranged in the Committee concerning the Mass, it might again be understood as nothing else than that we helped to condemn the teaching of our ministers as erroneous in this particular, as well as in the preceding matter, which, however, through the bestowal of the grace of God, is not at all in our mind, and cannot take place with good conscience. Your Highness, princes, and the others, yes, each and every one, should likewise well consider that, if we be allowed to hold in our provinces different, opposing masses, even though the papal mass were not contrary to God and to his holy Word (which nevertheless may never more be maintained), still, such a state of things would bring about contention, tumult, revolt and every misfortune among people in general, and especially among those who have a proper zeal for the honor and name of God, and would not at all promote peace or unity.

But as to what the aforesaid papal masses mean, and how the report concerning the same must be understood, we have easily perceived that the said report is intended only for the places where the other doctrines arose, and not at all for your magistrates and districts. And therefore it not unreasonably surprises us that you propose that we and others adhering to this doctrine (that is, the clear, pure word of God) should set up a standard in behalf of our subjects and establish order and regulation in our cities, towns and provinces. This you would not be at all willing to suffer, as we think, if the conditions were reversed. And you should be much less opposed to this—that we and our subjects in our provinces unanimously make use of the Supper of Christ, as the evangelical mass, alone founded on divine Scripture, according to the institution of our Saviour, Jesus Christ—than that you should against your will be required to suppress in your states and towns the papal masses or any similar thing, that is contrary to the divine appointment and the usage of the holy Apostles, and is founded only on the fables and devices of men.

On that account and because the doctrine of our party has been established in our dominions with divine, invincible Scripture, directed against the papal masses in the aforementioned ways, and such an article is not the least that it will be necessary to treat in a Christian Council; (moreover, seeing that neither the Summons to this Diet, which is later in date than the aforementioned official letter and the Instruction, nor the Instruction as read, mention anything of this or other similar articles) we have therefore been not at all mistaken in holding fast to the same, in accordance with our hitherto oft-announced declaration and our Christian remonstrance.

Although it is plainly manifest what we permit to be preached in our dominions concerning the holy sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; nevertheless, for manifold considerations and good Christian reasons, we hold it to be improper and unprofitable that such an ordinance in behalf of the doctrine (or against it) as

the report contemplates, should be passed by this Diet, since his imperial Majesty's Summons makes no mention of it, nor were those[1] to whom these clauses apply either summoned or heard. And it will indeed be well to consider, if such an important article be undertaken independently of the Council, to what forbearance and injustice such a course might bring his imperial Majesty your royal highness, princes and other Estates of the Empire.

Likewise, as it was further set forth in the Committee's report, that the minister should preach and teach the holy Gospel according to the interpretation of Scripture approved and received by the holy Christian Church,—that would pass very well if all parties were agreed as to what is the true, holy Christian Church. But so long as there is great contention about this, and there is no certain preaching of doctrine, then [we purpose] to abide by the word of God alone, since indeed according to the command of God nothing else shall be preached, and to make clear and explain one text of holy, divine Scripture by another; as indeed this same holy, divine Scripture, in all things needful for Christian men to know, will be found in itself clear and bright enough to illumine all darkness. Therefore we purpose, with the grace and help of God, to abide by it to the end, that only the word of God and the holy Gospel of the Old and New Testaments, as contained in the biblical books, shall be preached clearly and purely, and nothing that is against it. For with that, as the one truth and the correct rule of all Christian doctrine and life, no one can err or fail, and whoso builds on it and endures shall prevail against all the gates of hell. Nevertheless, on the other hand, all human additions and trifles shall fail, and cannot stand before God.

But that the aforementioned report is not conducive to the maintenance of peace and unity in the Empire pending the coming Council, but is directly opposed to it, is clearly to be perceived from this, that in the first clause it had been arranged that those who up to this time abide by the imperial Edict, now henceforth also shall and will so continue; and no distinction was made therein as to what and how far such obligation to the penalties of the said Edict should extend—for it cannot otherwise be understood in the ordinary meaning of the words.

As then, it already happens to some of our clergy from other magistrates, under color of said Edict—because they for the sake of their consciences, founded on the word of God, do not hold in conformity with the Edict—that they [these magistrates] have ventured, in spite of the decree of the former Diet of Speyer, to bring these our own subjects under the jurisdiction of other courts, and apart from and contrary to justice, forcibly to take and withhold their tithes, rent, interest, tribute, debt, inheritance and other things. And it is well to take heed, what other acts of a similar character might be undertaken under the same assumed pretext, and give reason for retaliation; which in any case would contribute little or nothing to the maintenance of peace and unity;—to say nothing of anyone of your party venturing, under pretext of the Edict and the ban and double-ban intended as the penalty of the same, to act violently against us or any of our party, and attempting to compel us to do that which is against God, his holy Word, our souls and good conscience.

[1] The allusion is to the Sacramentarians, or Zwinglians, who were intended to be condemned in the articles on Masses, already quoted.

But every one can well consider what a Christian magistrate will be bound to do in such a case, for the maintenance of God's Word, and for the souls, bodies, lives and property of himself and his subjects, for freedom, defence and protection. Therefore it is always reasonable in such a case to stand fast by the article in the former decree of the Diet of Speyer; which, for the sake of peace and unity, as well as for other good Christian reasons, suspends and annuls the Edict [of Worms].

And from all of this, it will now be clearly enough perceived and openly proved, that the decree of the former Diet of Speyer was of more service to peace and unity than the report of the aforementioned article, as such decree was regarded by the electors, princes and all other Estates of the Empire. Yet, in spite of such a former, clear decree, wherein the imperial Edict is suspended, under the assumed pretext of the same, some have not scrupled forcibly to take and detain the property of our subjects. What then may we now expect from our opponents, or part of them at any rate, but ill-will, dispute, strife, and no peace, if the door of the Edict should again be opened to them, as the aforesaid report contemplates, and the former decree of Speyer be abandoned?

Likewise your royal Highness, princes and the others, if the aforementioned article becomes established, cannot maintain that through it the former decree of the imperial Diet is not annulled but only made clear. For it is plainly an entire annulment of the former article, and it could no longer be granted to all the Christian states of the Empire that they might conduct themselves in all cases according to the word of God and their right good consciences, as for such things they hope and trust to answer well before God and his imperial Majesty. And with no grounds may it be said that there are such words as shall permit every one, pending a Council, to do everything according to his own good pleasure and choice, as some say of it who doubtless do not think or know much of the just and severe judgment of God, to which such answer first of all belongs.

We desire also to say to every one who thinks to silence us, if the oftenmentioned imperial decree should be misused by us, we hereby fully submit ourselves to all deaths by which it commonly belongs to us to suffer justice and equity. And we likewise have no objection, if at any time one is apprehensive that the aforesaid article might be made a cover for a new, unchristian doctrine, that he should explain it—just as we with the permission of your Grace and the others, have set forth an impartial Christian explanation and given it to the Committee. But it should not, as your first draft contemplated, be entirely annulled in its true substance, but remain according to the letter, in honor and force.

And since we have in his Roman imperial Majesty, as a Christian Emperor and our most gracious Lord, entire, unfailing and comforting confidence, if the business were reported with good grounds to his imperial Majesty, his imperial Majesty would have permitted nothing to be set in motion in addition to what is contemplated in the Instruction, as well as his imperial Majesty's Summons and official letter; since we know clearly enough nothing else can be found that could be treated in all ways so that peace and unity may be maintained in the Empire. Moreover, in all our aforementioned transactions with you, and in all our conduct, we have sought nothing except the honor of God before all

things, as well as our soul's salvation, Christian peace and unity. That we can and will testify before Almighty God, the sole Searcher and Knower of all hearts. On that account and if there had been the intention in respect to the aforesaid article, to abide in the proper way by the Instruction as read, there had been no necessity for the failure of the Committee, or for such deliberation and action; but you and your party have abandoned the submitted Instruction, as well as the Summons of his imperial Majesty.

After all, we expect from your royal Highness, princes, and others, as our dear and gracious uncles, cousins, friends and especially esteemed ones, as we also once more kindly request and humbly pray, that you become willing again to bring to mind the occasion of this action, and our complaint, and consider with diligence the ground and reason of the same, and allow yourselves to be moved by nothing against the former decree, unanimously concluded, pledged, written and sealed; and not act as nobody has justice, power and right to do, for reasons mentioned and others well-founded, which it is best now not to repeat.

And if this third announcement of our evident grievances shall not be allowed by your imperial Highness, princes and others, then we herewith PROTEST and testify openly before God, our sole Creator, Preserver, Redeemer and Saviour (who, as we mentioned before, alone searches and knows all hearts, and therefore will judge justly) likewise before all men and creatures, that we for ourselves, our subjects and in behalf of all, each and every one, consider null and void the entire transaction and the intended decree, which in the aforementioned or in other cases, is undertaken, agreed and passed, against God, his holy word, all our soul's salvation and good conscience, likewise against the formerly announced decree of the Diet of Speyer—[and we protest] not secretly, nor willingly, but for reasons above stated and others good and well-founded. This protest we are compelled to issue and to make a more thorough and true report to his imperial Majesty, our gracious Lord. To the same effect yesterday, with reference to the rendered, intended decree, we thereupon through our Protest[1] (made in haste, which we also herewith repeat) let our mind be plainly known; and besides we offered nevertheless, until the aforementioned general and free Christian Council or national assembly, by divine help and in conformity with the contents of the aforesaid decree of the former Diet of Speyer, in our jurisdictions, and among and with our subjects and kindred, that we will so hold, live and rule as we hope and trust to answer for ourselves before Almighty God and his Roman imperial Majesty, as a Christian Emperor. Whatever also concerns the rent, interest, revenue, and peace of the clergy, we in that also will maintain and prove ourselves to be incorruptible. And likewise, in respect to the subsequent articles, concerning anabaptism[2] and printing, as we completely agreed in the Diet, we desire to be

[1] The material parts of this first Protest are given by Ney (p. 233) in his history of the Diet. See bibliographical note. The complete document is in Walch, 16: 383 *seq.*

[2] The article against the Anabaptists, which the Protest approves as "in every respect proper," was: "All Anabaptists and rebaptized persons, male or female, of mature age, shall be judged and brought from natural life to death, by fire or sword or otherwise, as may befit the persons, without preceding trial by spiritual judges. . . . Such persons as of themselves, or after instruction, at once confess

in accord with his imperial Highness, the princes, and the others; also we consider the contents of the same articles to be in every respect proper.[1] We also bind ourselves to extend further our aforesaid complaints and Protest, and whatever besides our further necessity demands with regard to everything. And above all we desire, unquestionably expect and are satisfied that his Roman imperial Majesty will graciously hold and manifest himself toward us as a gracious Christian Emperor, loving God above all things, and our gracious Lord, in consideration of our Christian, honorable, honest and immutable minds and due obedience. Wherein we hereupon may also render friendly and voluntary service and may show kind and gracious inclinations to your royal Highness, princes, and the others, as our dear and gracious uncles, cousins, friends and especially esteemed ones. That we are willing and inclined to do out of friendship, also from voluntary obedience, goodwill and Christian love and duty.

Done at Speyer on the twentieth day of April, and in the 1529th year after the birth of Christ, our dear Lord and Saviour.

(Signed) JOHN, Duke of Saxony, Elector.
GEORGE, Margrave of Brandenburg.
ERNEST, Duke of Lüneberg.
PHILIP, Landgrave of Hesse.
WOLF [GANG], Prince of Anhalt.

VII

THE PEACE OF AUGSBURG[2]

CONSTITUTION OF THE PEACE between their Imperial and Royal Majesties, on the one hand, and the Electors and Estates of the Realm on the other.

1. WE FERDINAND, etc.,—Whereas, at all the Diets held during the last thirty years and more, and at several special sessions besides,

their error, and are willing to undergo penances and chastisement therefor, and pray for clemency—these may be pardoned by their government, as may befit their standing, conduct, youth and general circumstances. We will also that all of their children, according to Christian order, usage and rite, shall be baptized in their youth. Whoever shall despise this, and will not do it, shall, if he persists in that course, be held to be an Anabaptist, and shall be subjected to our above-named ordinance."

[1] The article on printing, which the protesting princes also fully approved, reads: "In addition, we, also the electors, princes and Estates of the Empire, pending the Council, will and order that each government shall with all possible diligence take oversight of all printing and book-publishing, that nothing be hereafter printed that is new [i. e. heretical]—and especially abusive writings, whether publicly or privately composed and printed—or be sold or be carried about and offered for sale; but what shall further be composed, printed or had for sale shall first be inspected by that government, through appointed, qualified persons, and if defects are found therein, the same shall be forbidden to be printed or sold under heavy penalties; moreover, it is commanded and enjoined that the authors, printers and sellers, if they transgress such command, shall be punished by the government under which they live or are found, according to opportunity."

[2] The document is printed in full, with a mass of illustrative and supplementary matter, in Lehmann's *De Pace Religionis acta publica et originalia*, Frankfurt, 1707, pp. 62–65. Copious extracts, not always verbally exact, are given in Gieseler, 4: 207–209. A critical edition of the text has been published by Karl Brandi, München, 1896.

there have often been negotiations and consultations to establish between the Estates of the Holy Empire a general, continuous and enduring peace in regard to the contending religions; and several times terms of peace were drawn up, which, however, were never sufficient for the maintenance of peace, but in spite of them the Estates of the Empire remained continually in bitterness and distrust toward each other, from which not a little evil has its origin: inasmuch then, as in the continued division of religion a comprehensive agreement and treaty of peace, regarding both religions and profane or civil things, was not undertaken—and in all ways these revised and settled articles, concerning both religions hereafter to be named, might let one know how one should finally stand to the other—so that the Estates and subjects could not be sure of continual and abiding safety, but everybody had continually to stand doubtfully in unbearable danger: to remove such serious uncertainty, and to secure again peace and confidence in the minds of the Estates and subjects toward each other, and to save the German nation, our beloved Fatherland, from final dissolution and ruin, We, on the one hand, have united and agreed with the Electors and the regular Princes and Estates present, and with the deputies and embassies of those absent, as they on the other hand with Us.

2. We therefore establish, will and command, that from henceforth no one—of whatsoever honor, rank or character he may be, for any sort of cause, whatever name it may have or under whatever pretence it shall be done—shall engage in feuds, make war upon, rob, seize, invest or besiege another. Nor shall he, in person or through any agent, descend upon any castle, town, manor, fortification, villages, estates, hamlets, or without the consent of that other, seize them wickedly with violent deed, nor damage them by fire or in other ways. Nor shall anyone give such perpetrators counsel or help, or render them aid and assistance in any other way. Nor shall one knowingly or willingly show them hospitality, house them, give them to eat or drink, keep or suffer them. But every one shall love the other with true friendship and Christian love. It is provided also that no Estate or member of the Holy Empire shall take away or obstruct (or in the proper place he shall suffer justice) free access to provisions, food, trade, rent, money and income; but in every way shall his imperial Majesty, and We, and all the Estates, mutually suffer to abide all the contents of these present constitutions of the accomplished peace of the land.

3. And in order that such peace—and also on account of the disputed religions, as is seen from the causes before named and mentioned, and is required by the great necessity of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation—may be the more established, founded, and made secure and enduring between the Roman Imperial Majesty and Us and the Electors, Princes and Estates of the Holy Empire of the German nation; therefore the imperial Majesty, and We, and the Electors, Princes and Estates of the Holy Empire, will make war on no Estate of the Empire on account of the Augsburg Confession and the doctrine, religion and faith of the same, nor injure, nor do violence to, or in other ways invade it, against conscience, knowledge and will, where the religion, faith, church-usages, ordinances and ceremonies of the Augsburg Confession have been established or may hereafter be established in their principali-

ties, lands and dominions. Nor shall they through mandate, or in any other way trouble or disparage them, but shall let them quietly and peacefully remain in their religion, faith, church-usages, ordinances and ceremonies, as well as their possessions, real or personal property, land, people, dominions, governments, honors and rights. And the opposing religion shall be brought to a unanimous Christian understanding and agreement not otherwise than by Christian, friendly and peaceful means and ways. All this [to be done] according to imperial and kingly dignities, princely honors, and true words, and sanctions of the peace of the land.

4. On the other hand, the Estates that have accepted the Augsburg Confession shall suffer his imperial Majesty, Us and Electors, Princes and other Estates of the Holy Empire, adhering to the old religion, spiritual or secular, together with their chapters and other spiritual Estates, notwithstanding whether and where they may have removed or changed their residences (provided nevertheless, that the appointment of ministers be conducted as a special article herein directs) to abide in like manner by our religion, faith, church-usages, ordinances and ceremonies. They shall also leave undisturbed their possessions, real and personal property, lands, people, dominions, government, honors and rights, rents, interest and tithes. They shall suffer them to possess these peaceably and quietly, to enjoy them, to follow after them unmolested, and faithfully to remain in them. Nor shall they by force or other misdeeds undertake anything against them, but in all ways, according to the letter and order of the laws of the Holy Empire, its rights, ordinances and edicts, and the established peace of the land, each one shall with regard to the other content himself with his proper and legitimate rights—all of which in accordance with princely honor, true words, the sanctions of the established peace of the land include.

5. Yet all others[1] if they are not adherents of either of the above mentioned religions, are not intended in this peace, but shall be altogether excluded.

6. And since, in the negotiation of this peace, there has been disagreement about what should be done when one or more of the spiritual [Estates] should abandon the old religion, on account of the archbishoprics, prelatures and benefices that were held by them, about which the adherents of both religions could not come to an agreement: therefore, by the authority of the honored Roman Imperial Majesty, fully delegated to Us, we have declared and established and do hereby make known, that where an archbishop, bishop, prelate or other spiritual incumbent shall depart from our old religion, he shall immediately abandon, without any opposition or delay, his archbishopric, bishopric, prelature, and other benefices,

[1] The effect of this article was to deny all protection of law, not only to such sects as the Anabaptists, but to the churches of the Reformed or Calvinistic faith. Several of the free cities, like Strasburg, and at least one considerable province, the Palatinate, either strongly favored or had openly adopted this type of reformation rather than the Lutheran. This process went on with greatly accelerated rapidity after 1555, and before 1600 no fewer than eight principalities, together with a large number of free cities (especially those on the lower Rhine) had become Reformed. For an excellent outline of this movement, see Moeller, *History of the Christian Church*, 3: 299–314. The Reformed churches had no legal *status* in the Empire until the treaty of Westphalia, in 1648.

with the fruits and incomes that he may have had from it, nevertheless without prejudice to his honors. Also the chapters, and those to whom by common right it belongs, or is the custom of churches and foundations, shall be permitted to elect and ordain a person belonging to the old religion. All which spiritual chapters and other churches shall be left in unmolested and peaceful enjoyment of church and monastery foundations, elections, presentation and confirmation, old customs, rights, real and personal property—nevertheless, not interfering with the future Christian, friendly and final settlement of religion.

7. But since several Estates and their ancestors have confiscated several chapters, monasteries and other spiritual possessions, and have applied their income to churches, schools, charities, and other things: so also such confiscated property which does not belong to them (if they are immediately subject to the Empire and are Estates of the Empire, and if the clergy did not have possession of it at the time of the treaty of Passau or since that time) shall be included in this agreement of peace, and shall remain by the regulation [determining] how each Estate shall deal with the above mentioned confiscated and already sequestrated properties. And to secure an abiding, eternal peace, the said Estates shall not on this account justly or unjustly be discussed or molested. Therefore, by and with the authority of this edict, we command and order the Supreme Court of his imperial Majesty and their colleagues, that in respect to such property they shall not recognize or decree any citation, mandate or process.

8. Also, in order that the aforesaid mutually-related religions may so much the more live and abide with one another in perpetual peace and good security, the spiritual jurisdiction shall not interfere or be exercised against the Augsburg Confession of religion, as regards appointment of clergy, church-usages, ordinances and ceremonies, if they have been established or may be established, until the final settlement of religion; but, as a following special article directs, shall let that religion [of the Augsburg Confession], faith, church-usages, ordinances, ceremonies, and appointment of clergy, go its own way, and make no opposition or contradiction, but (as was said above) until a final Christian settlement of religion, shall let the spiritual jurisdiction rest, and remain inactive and suspended. Yet spiritual Electors, Princes, Estates, collegia, monasteries, members of orders, shall of course be left unmolested in the enjoyment of their rents, interest on money, tithes, livings and other rights and privileges. But in other things and cases, not pertaining to the religion of the Augsburg Confession, faith, church-usages, ordinances, ceremonies, and appointment of clergy, the spiritual jurisdiction through the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, according to the custom of its exercise in each place where they are in the possession and use of their power, shall be exercised, used and practised unhindered in the future as heretofore.

9. As also all outstanding rent, interest, money and tithes, as before said, shall follow the Estates connected with the old religion; so each party in whose jurisdiction the rents, interest, money, tithes or properties are located, shall nevertheless retain over these properties his civil authority, rights and justice, which he had before the beginning of this quarrel in religion, and which have been in use, and shall in no way be

deprived of the same. Provided, however, that by the said properties the necessary ministers of the churches, preachers and schools, also alms and hospital dues, which formerly were given and were due to be given—such ministers of the churches and schools, no matter of what religion they may be, shall hereafter be supported just as they formerly were supported by the aforesaid properties.

10. And if, on account of such arrangement, strife and misunderstanding shall result, then shall both parties elect one or two referees (and if these cannot come to an agreement, they shall elect an impartial umpire, who shall afterwards sit with them to decide the case) to compare both sides, and after proper consideration they shall give their judgment within six months, what and how much shall be given for the support of the aforesaid ministries and other things. However, while this dispute lasts about the support of the clergy, those in possession shall not be arrested or hindered, so long as no peaceful agreement has been secured or the decision of the referees or umpire has not been given. But nevertheless, in the meantime, as said before, those to whom belong the rent, money, interest, tithes and property from which the ministers of the church have been supported of old, shall continue to pay what they have long given such ministers, until the decision of the case.

11. No Estate shall endeavor to urge another or the subjects of the same to his religion, nor against his authority take them under his protection and care, nor annoy in any way.[1] And should any one have taken the same heretofore and of old as patron and protector, they shall not be deprived hereafter, and that is not intended.

12. But when our subjects and those of the Electors, Princes and Estates, adhering to the old religion or to the Augsburg Confession, for the sake of their religion wish to go with wife and children to another place in the lands, principalities and cities of the Electors, Princes and Estates of the Holy Empire, and settle there; such going and coming, and the sale of property and goods, in return for reasonable compensation for serfdom and arrears of taxes, as in every place from ancient times to the present has been held customary, shall be everywhere unhindered, permitted and granted, and on our honor and faith shall in no way be punished. Yet this shall add nothing to the magistrates' rights and customs regarding serfdom, nor shall anything be hereby abated or taken away.

13. And hereafter a settlement in matters of religion and faith shall be sought in proper and fitting ways, and without constant peace it is not easy to come to a Christian, friendly settlement in religion; therefore have We and the Councillors in the stead of the Princes and Estates granted this state of peace, to hold such peace fixed, fast, unbroken, for the sake of a Christian settlement, and we shall truly comply with the same. Where then such settlement will not ensue by means of general councils, national synods, colloquies[2] and imperial acts, then shall this state of peace in all the aforesaid points and articles no less continue and remain in force, until a final settlement of religion and matters of faith.

[1] This recognizes and makes permanent the rule adopted at the first Diet of Speyer (1526), *Cujus rex ejus religio*—or, the religion of the subject follows that of his Prince.

[2] The colloquy of Worms was summoned, in pursuance of this article, in 1557, but it was broken up by the dissensions of the Protestants, without having accomplished anything. See the *Acta* in CR, 9: 272 *seq.*

And herewith in the manner aforesaid, and in all ways besides, they shall establish, conclude and remain in an enduring, constant, unbroken and perpetual[1] peace.

14. And in such peace the free knights, who are immediately subject to his Imperial Majesty and Us, shall also be included, and it is further provided that they shall be interfered with, persecuted or troubled by no one on account of both the aforesaid religions.

15. But, moreover in many free and imperial cities both religions, namely, our old religion and the Augsburg Confessional religion, have hitherto come into vogue and practice; the same shall remain hereafter and be held in the same cities, and citizens and inhabitants of the same free and imperial cities, spiritual ranks and secular, shall peacefully and quietly dwell with and among one another, and no party shall venture to abolish the religion, church-customs or ceremonies of another, or persecute them therefor, but each party shall permit the other, in virtue of this peace, to remain in a peaceful and friendly manner in [the enjoyment of] their religion, faith, church-usages, customs and ceremonies, and of their goods and chattels, and all else that the Estates of the Empire have decided and commanded above concerning religion.

16. And all ordinances, contained in previous imperial edicts or otherwise, must be understood in the sense of this treaty of peace, in all points and articles; nothing may take, derogate or abate from the same; nor may any declaration or anything else that obstructs or alters the same, be given, acquired or received, or if it shall be already given, acquired or received, nevertheless [it shall be held] to be unworthy and invalid, and shall not be treated or recognized as law.

17. Each and every one of the above written articles specifically drawn up and relating to his imperial Majesty and Us, his imperial Majesty and We, by his imperial and our royal honor and word, pledge ourselves and our successors to hold and execute firm, fast, inviolate and genuine; by them honestly and unresistingly to walk and live; and moreover now or in the future, whether for completeness or under some other pretext of whatsoever name, not to criticise, alter or let them fail, nor permit any one else to do this for and on account of their Imperial and Royal Majesties.

18. And we, the appointed councillors of the Electors, instead of their graces the Electors, also for their successors and heirs, we the illustrious Princes, prelates, counts and lords, and the delegates and ambassadors of the free and imperial cities, instead and in behalf of our rulers and chiefs, also for their successors and heirs, will and promise by princely honor and worth, in right good faith and in words of truth, also by loyalty and faith, so much as may lie in any of them, as it stands everywhere above, to hold it firm, fast, genuine and inviolate, and by it truly and unhesitatingly to walk and live.

19. We further pledge and bind ourselves to all parties, that the

[1] "These truces with the infidels [said Wamba] make an old man of me." "Go to, knave, how so?" said Cedric, his features prepared to receive favorably the expected jest. "Because," answered Wamba, "I remember three of them in my day, each of which was to endure for the course of fifty years; so that, by computation, I must be at least a hundred and fifty years old." (*Scott's "Ivanhoe."*) This Peace of Augsburg, for a "perpetual," "eternal" treaty, endured a long time—something like sixty-three years!

imperial Majesty, We and any Estate, with whatsoever sought pretext, with violence or in any other manner, secretly or openly, through ourselves or others acting in our behalf, will not burden, offer violence to, make war upon, persecute, insult or trouble another; And also if one party or Estate, contrary to such established peace, shall offer violence to or oppress another (as nevertheless should not be) now or hereafter, with overt act, secretly or openly, we promise that his Imperial Majesty, We and they, also our and their successors and heirs, will in that case not only give no counsel, help or assistance to the violator, or one who has undertaken or is to undertake the overt act, but also if, contrary to this peace, any Estate shall offer violence, oppose or make war, we will give help and assistance against the violator or one who commits the overt act,—all truly without danger, etc.

20. Also herewith, and by the authority of this our imperial edict, we command and order the judges of the imperial courts and their colleagues, that they hold and conduct themselves in conformity with this treaty of peace, as well as give fitting and necessary relief of the law to the appealing suitors themselves, no matter to which of the aforesaid religions they belong, and against all such to recognize and decree no citation, mandate or process.

Proclaimed at Augsburg, in the year 1555, September 25.

THE DECLARATION OF KING FERDINAND

We Ferdinand[1] . . . do proclaim and make known to everybody by this letter: Whereas, at this Diet now in session for the arrangement and settling of a religious peace, the Estates and delegates adhering to the Augsburg Confession have submissively brought it to our attention, that knights, cities and communes belonging to several archbishops, bishops and other spiritual [Estates], a long time ago became adherents of the Augsburg Confession, and still are such; and since the same, because of their religion long since received and established might be persecuted by their said lords and rulers, before and until the opposing religions shall be brought by Christian, friendly and peaceful ways to a Christian understanding, and agreement; and that this was not more certain to happen than dissension and shameful waging of war between lords and rulers and their subjects: but to anticipate such things, they dutifully entreated Us to recommend the spiritual [Estates] and prevail upon them, that hereafter, as well as for a long time hitherto, for the maintenance of the general and highly necessary peace in the Holy Empire of the German nation, they permit these same subjects of theirs to remain undisturbed and without persecution on account of the religion of the Augsburg Confession, and let them await the aforesaid final agreement between the opposing religions; and in consideration of that they conceded that such subjects would do whatever is necessary in the present constitution of religious peace. On the other hand, the Estates and delegates belonging to our old religion urged altogether different grounds and requests; moreover they declared that the Estates of both religions cannot agree with one another in this matter.

[1] The long and tedious list of titles is omitted.

Therefore, by the authority of his Roman Imperial Majesty, our dear brother and Lord, fully delegated to Us, We have announced, ordered and determined to do and make known by the authority of this letter, as follows: That the spiritual [Estates] shall not, on account of religion, faith, church-usages, and ceremonies, hereafter persecute through anybody their knights, cities and communes, which long time ago became adherents of the Augsburg Confession and its religion, and have openly professed and practised the said religion, faith, church-usages, ordinances and ceremonies; but shall permit them to be undisturbed in the same, until the aforesaid Christian settlement of religion.

And in order that this Declaration of ours might be so much more unassailable, the spiritual [Estates] present and the absent councillors and delegates, pledge to Us their dutiful honor and pleasure, that the limitation [*Derogatio*][1] with regard to the present religious peace of this Diet (to the effect, that contrary to the said religious peace no Declaration or anything else that might obstruct or alter the same, shall be given, acquired or received, but shall be invalid) comprised with other matters in our aforesaid inviolate declaration and edict, by their honor and power shall otherwise [than provided by this Declaration] be permitted to stand fast and remain.

For the better witness and security of all this, we have written this letter with our own hand, and confirmed it with our royal seal attached.

Given at our and the Holy Empire's city of Augsburg, the 24th of September, in the year 1555, after the birth of Christ, our dear Lord and Saviour of our reign in Rome the 25th year, and in other lands the 29th.

FERDINAND.

J. JONAS, *Vice-Chancellor.*

By the personal command of our Lord the King.

[1] This refers, of course, to paragraphs 16 and 17 of the preceding document already drawn up, but not proclaimed until the following day.

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